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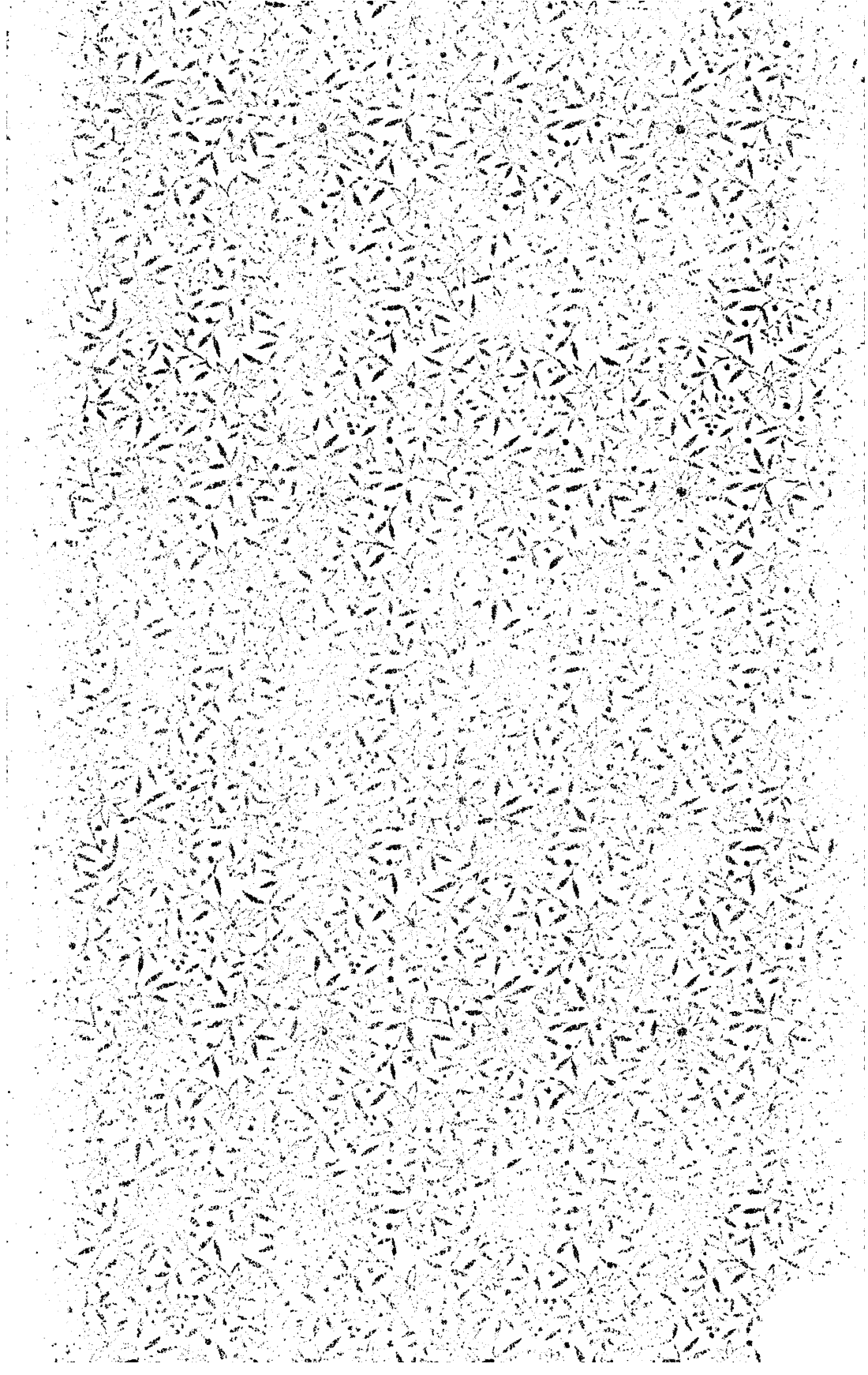


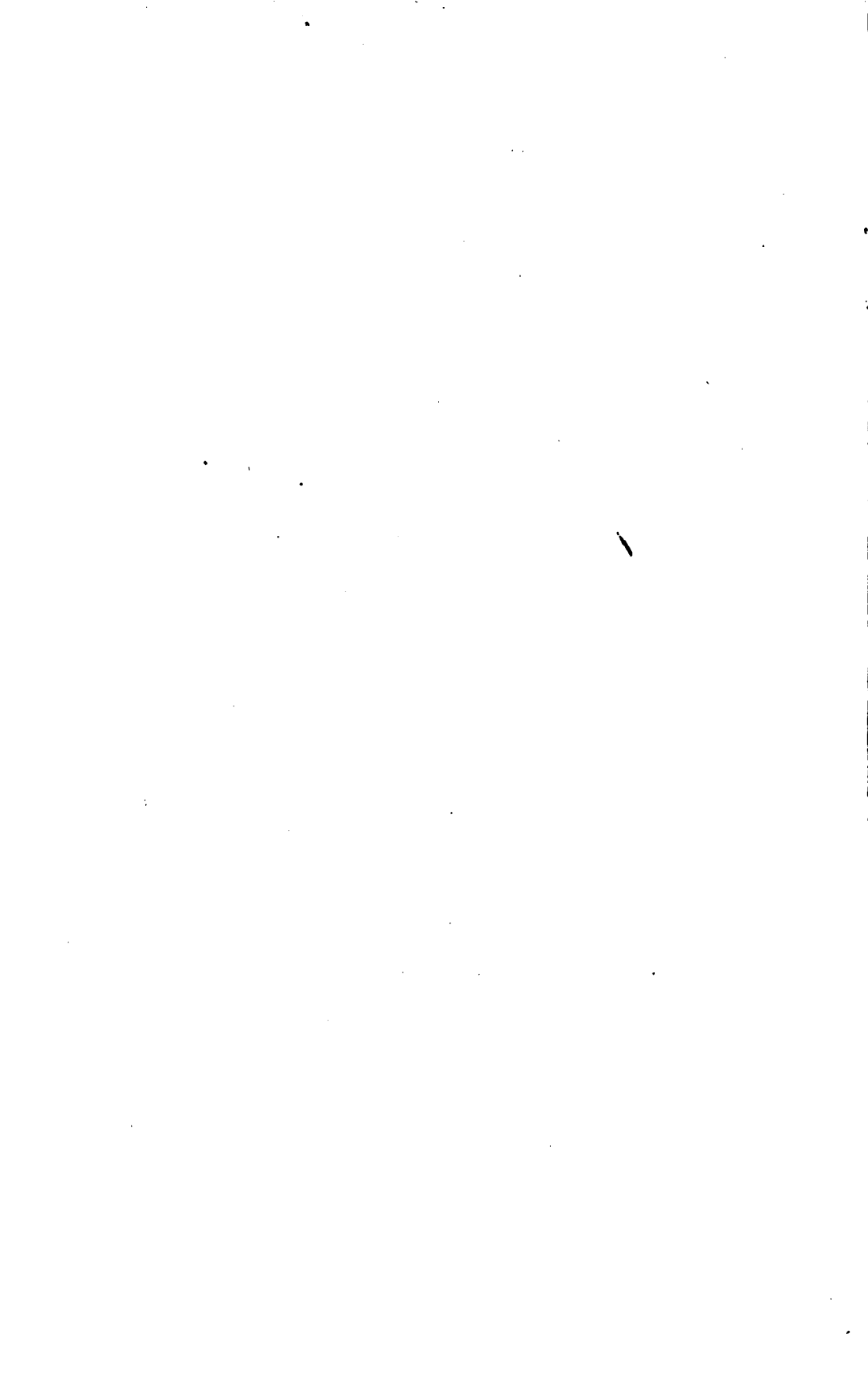
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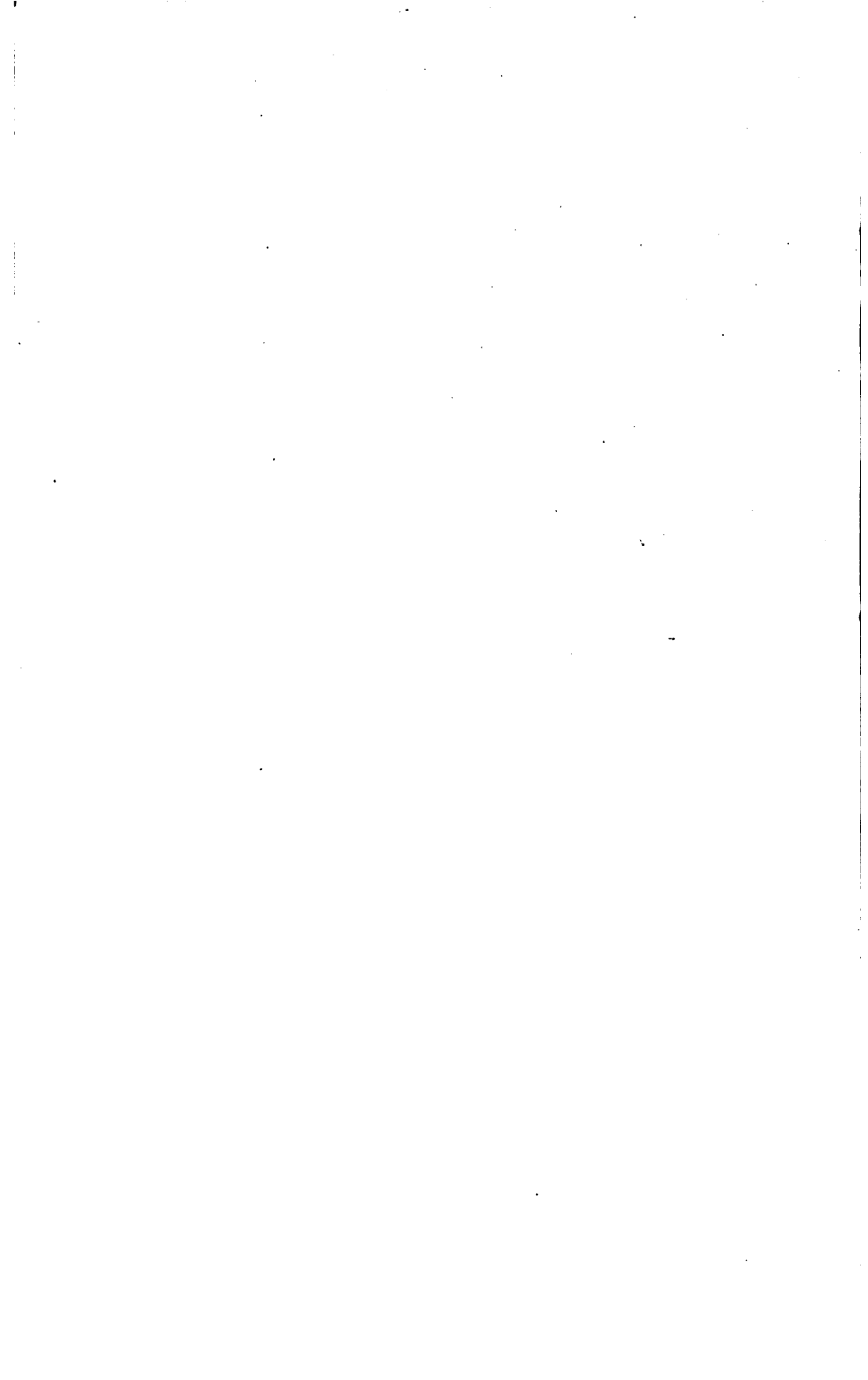
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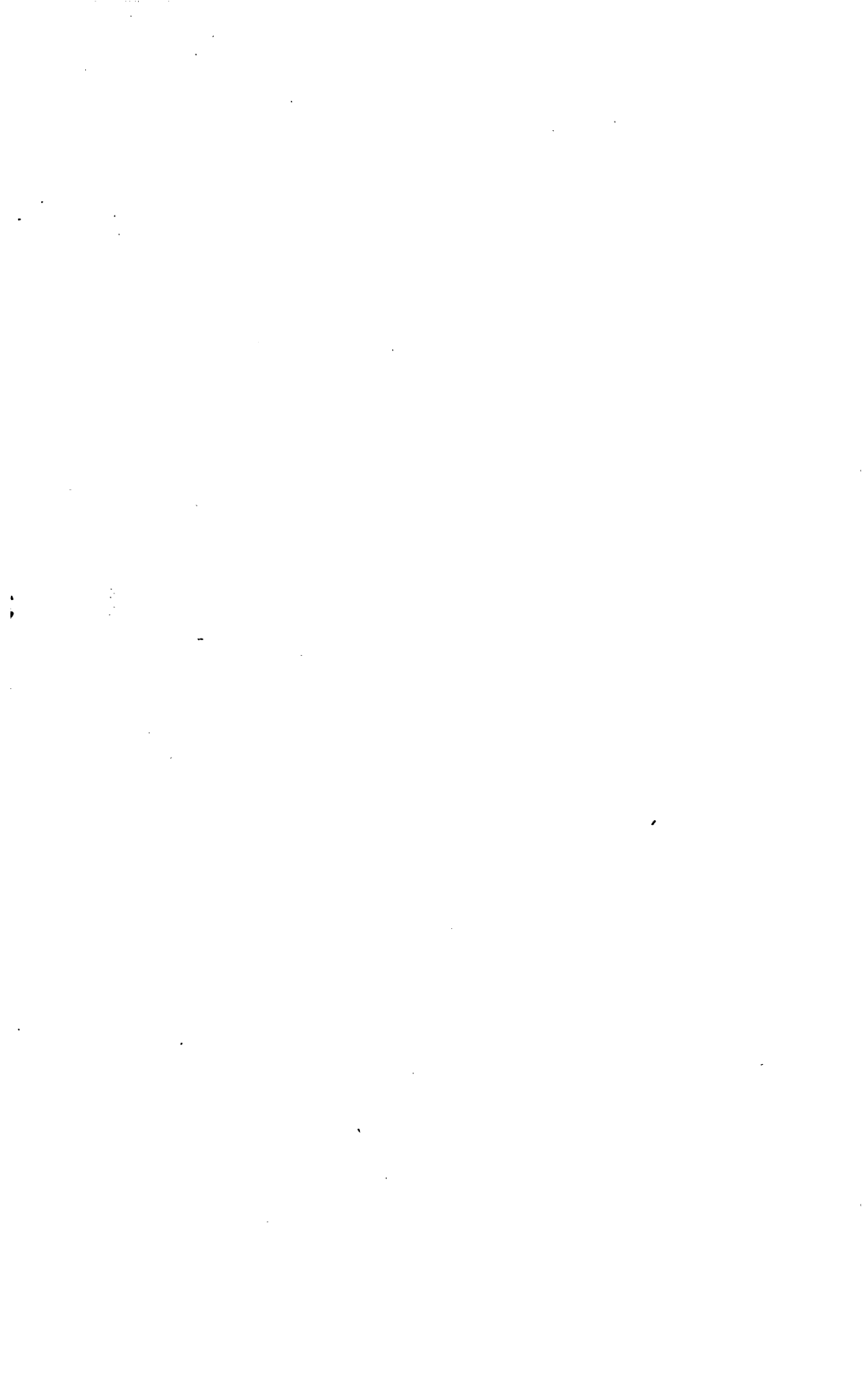




Charles W. Eliot L.L.D.

with regards of
Lyman Abbott.







Henry Wood Beecher

① *Cong. churches, U. S. — Council, Brooklyn,
N. Y., Jan. 16, 1890.*

PROCEEDINGS OF A COUNCIL IN
PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN,
NEW-YORK, FOR THE INSTALLATION OF THE
REV. LYMAN ABBOTT, D. D., AS PASTOR, AND
THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE
REV. HOWARD S. BLISS, AS ASSISTANT PASTOR,
HELD JANUARY 16, 1890 ∴ ∴ ∴ ∴ WITH
A SERMON BY LYMAN ABBOTT, D. D., ON
THE NEW THEOLOGY ∴ ∴ ∴ ∴ ∴

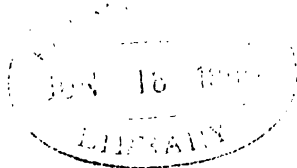
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②
BROOKLYN, NEW-YORK: 1890

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From
The President's Office.

INTRODUCTION.

THE proceedings of the Council called to advise and assist in the installation of the pastor-elect and the ordination and installation of the assistant pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, January 16, 1890, have been thought worthy of permanent preservation in book form, on account of the special interest and the special significance attaching to the event. This is not merely because the installation over this Christian Church, made illustrious by nearly half a century's pastorate of the greatest preacher of the century, if not of all centuries, makes it an historic occasion; but still more because it marks a distinct development of the life of the Church, at least of the Congregational churches, in the United States. It is this fact, beyond the others and added to them, which gives to this Council and to its results a distinctly valuable character, and demands of the student of current events especial attention to its significance.

Other churches have their missions and their mission pastors, and these latter are doing a large and noble work, worthy of all generous recognition. But it was made clearly to appear on this occasion that Mr. Bliss, though for the time being he has the especial charge of one of Plymouth's two missions, was not ordained and installed as a missionary pastor, but as a co-ordinate pastor with his senior in Plymouth Church. There are other assistants in the work of that church—one ordained clergyman in the special charge of the Mayflower Chapel, and two Parish Visitors (if we may coin a title to designate their office) in connection with the two chapels respectively. Thus Plymouth Church sets about the problem of city evangelization with the germ of a cathedral organization—a sort of Deàn and Chapter. To what it may lead we cannot, of course, pretend to foretell. Other churches, notably St. George's (Episcopal) in New-York, and the Berkeley Street Temple (Congregational) of Boston, are similarly and more thoroughly organized. But the experiment, if not absolutely new in non-Episcopal organizations, is nevertheless an experiment, and the Council's cordial approbation of the movement gives to it new force and sanction. Dr. Whiton's address may perhaps be fairly regarded as an interpretation of this aspect of this historic Council.

More notable, if not more significant, is the catholic composition of a Council which contained distinguished representatives of six denominations—the Congregational, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Reformed. It is true that only the Congregational

members were officially representatives of their churches; but it is also true that the others present equally, though wholly informally, represented the catholic spirit in their respective denominations. Congregational councils have before this time contained representatives from non-Congregational communions, so that this Council was not by any means unprecedented. And non-ecclesiastical conventions made up of representatives of different denominations—such, for example, as the Evangelical Alliance meetings—have familiarized us with the decadence of the sectarian spirit. But this is the first time in the church history of America that representative men of so many different denominations have united formally in ecclesiastical action—the Methodist joining with a church at least historically non-Arminian, the Episcopalian and the Presbyterian with the Congregationalist, the Baptist with a body of unbaptized—*i. e.*, unimmersed—believers. The full significance of this aspect of the Council was admirably interpreted by the nobly eloquent address of Dr. E. Winchester Donald, who, as an Episcopal clergyman, and a decided, if not a high, Churchman, welcomed to the Christian ministry men not episcopally ordained. That in this epoch-making speech he did truly interpret the sentiments of his fellow-members in the Council was abundantly demonstrated by the applause by which his speech was constantly interrupted and emphasized.

The theological significance of this Council is quite as great, though perhaps more likely to be misinterpreted. It would be a decided, though possibly a natural, mistake if the readers of these proceedings were to imagine that the Council indorsed the theology of the two ministers whom it installed. To correct that mistake it is only necessary to compare the theological statements of the two. Mr. Abbott declared that in opinion he inclined toward the doctrine of conditional immortality, while Mr. Bliss declared his belief in the unconditional immortality of the soul; Mr. Abbott, while disavowing for lack of evidence the hypothesis that Christ will be presented in another life to all who have not known him here, declared his conviction that the dogma of the decisive nature of this life's probation for all men was unscriptural, while Mr. Bliss, at least impliedly, if not in positive terms, indicated his acceptance of that dogma. It is, indeed, doubtful whether a single member of the Council would have subscribed Mr. Abbott's theological statement, any more than he could have adopted as his own Mr. Abbott's narrative of his Christian experience. What this Council signalizes theologically is, not the adoption of a new theological system, nor the abandonment of an old one, but the distinct recognition of the fact that not merely Christian fellowship, but ministerial and church fellowship as well, do not depend upon theological agreement. The Council ascertained, partly from the papers read and partly from the conversations thereon, that both Mr. Abbott and Mr. Bliss believe in historical Christianity, in Jesus Christ as Lord and Master, Teacher and Saviour, Divine Helper and Divine Healer, and that they engage in the Christian ministry because, in loyalty to Christ, they desire to help men and to heal men. On this broad basis the Council gave a right hand of fellowship to them and to the church which had called them to its service. The Council in this respect emphasizes what is far more important than any

mere theological departure: namely, the catholicity which cordially recognizes the right of private judgment in the ministry within lines of personal loyalty to Christ and consecration to His work.

In these three respects the Plymouth Church Council marks the results in action of movements in thought which have been going on contemporaneously, and for the last few years especially in the American Churches, toward more aggressive and better organized work, a larger and more purely Christian fellowship, and a greater intellectual freedom, each of these being characteristic of an age less theological and ecclesiastical than it may be more exclusively and simply Christian. It is pre-eminently these aspects of the Council which give it a historic character and make the record of its proceedings worthy of historical preservation, both for Plymouth Church and for a wider circle of readers than even its membership affords.

THE LETTER MISSIVE.

THE PLYMOUTH CHURCH, OF BROOKLYN, N. Y.,

To.....sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN,—The Great Head of the Church having, in His wisdom, called to His own more immediate presence our late beloved pastor, Henry Ward Beecher, in the fulness of his usefulness and of our devoted affection, we, while mourning our irreparable loss, felt it to be at once our duty and our privilege to continue the work to which our much-loved leader had devoted forty years of his life, and to carry it forward with increased earnestness and energy, as the best evidence of our reverence for his memory and of the impression which his life and teachings have made upon his people.

Our Heavenly Father, as we believe, has directed us in the choice of a successor to our departed teacher, and has enabled us to find one fully imbued with the spirit of the Master whom he served. Thus guided, we have united upon the Rev. Lyman Abbott, D. D., as our pastor; and he having accepted our call, a Council for advice concerning his installation and recognition will be held in our church.

We have also been led to unite in the choice of the Rev. Howard S. Bliss as assistant pastor, who has accepted our call; and he, though licensed to preach, not having been ordained to the work of the ministry, the advice of the same Council will be asked concerning his ordination and installation.

You are, therefore, affectionately invited to attend, by your pastor and delegate, upon a Council to be held at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, on January 16, 1890, at 10:30 A. M., to advise concerning the installation of our pastor and the ordination and installation of our assistant pastor, and, if deemed expedient, to assist this Church in such ordination and installation.

We are, fraternally yours, in the fellowship of the Gospel,

THOMAS G. SHEARMAN, A. D. WHEELOCK, THOMAS J. TILNEY,	}	<i>Committee of the Church.</i>
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JOHN CLAFLIN, AUGUSTUS STORRS. S. V. WHITE.	}	<i>Committee of the Society.</i>
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FREDERICK C. MANVEL, Clerk of the Church.

HENRY CHAPIN, Jr., Clerk of the Society.

* * Answers should be addressed to "F. C. Manvel, Clerk, Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y."

The following Churches and Ministers are invited to this Council :

Rochester Avenue Church, Brooklyn.	Tompkins Avenue Church, Brooklyn.
Park Church, “	Central Church, “
New England Church, “	Clinton Avenue Church, “
Tabernacle Church, “	Puritan Church, “
East Church, “	Lee Avenue Church, “
Richmond Hill Church, Long Island.	United Church, New Haven.
Trinity Church, New-York City.	First Church, Hartford.
Central Church, “ “	Asylum Hill Church, Hartford.
Pilgrim Church, “ “	First Church, New Britain.
First Church, Jersey City.	Old South Church, Boston.
First Church, Montclair.	First Church, Cambridge.
First Church, Upper Montclair.	Kirk Street Church, Lowell.
First Church, Stamford.	Piedmont Church, Worcester.

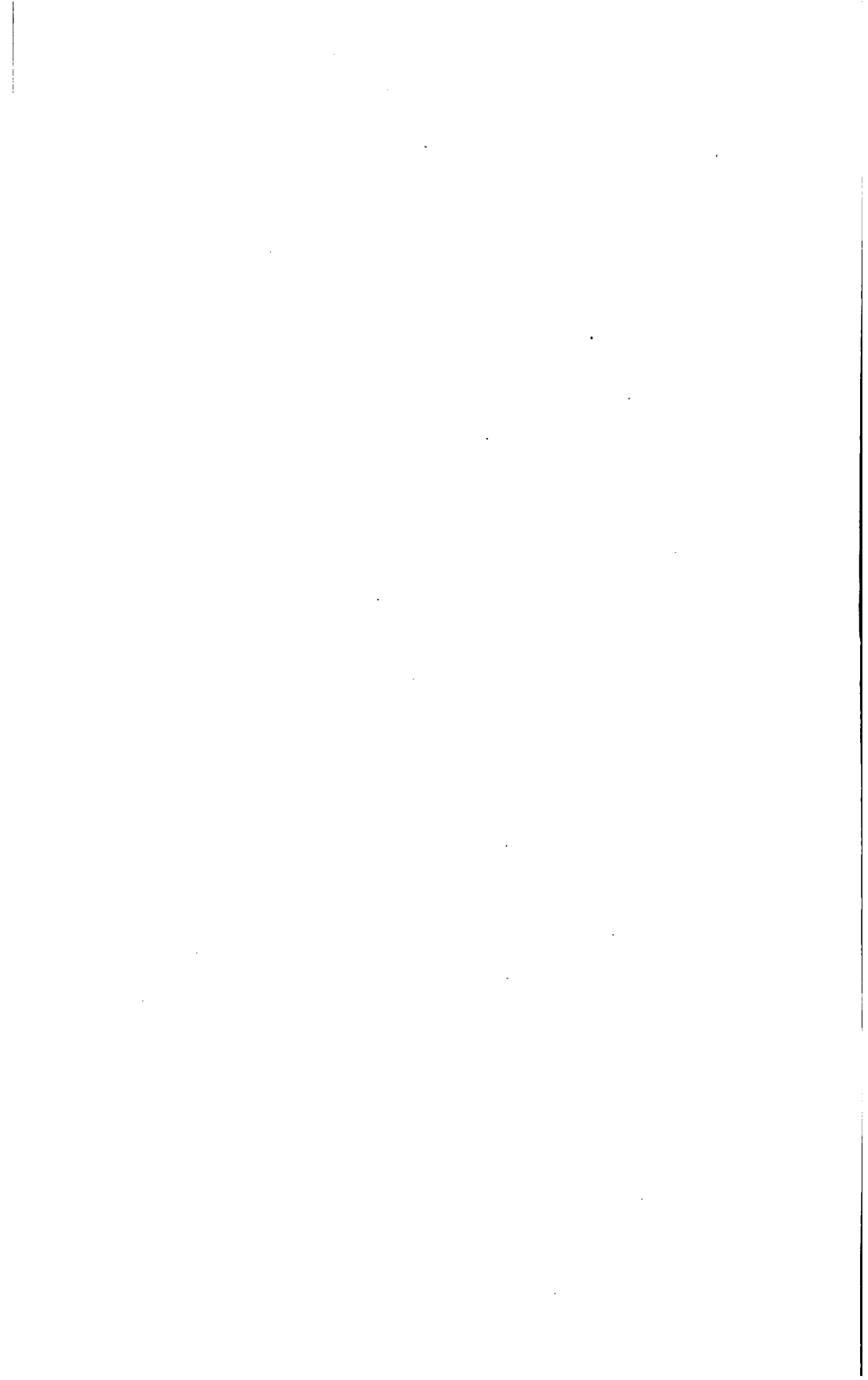
REV. EDWARD BEECHER, D. D.
REV. NOAH PORTER, D. D.
REV. WM. S. TYLER, D. D.

REV. TIMOTHY DWIGHT, D. D.
REV. GEO. P. FISHER, D. D.
REV. WM. J. TUCKER, D. D.

The following Ministers are also invited to sit with the Council and participate in its deliberations, as honorary members :

REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS, D. D.	REV. CHARLES HENRY HALL, D. D.
REV. E. WINCHESTER DONALD, D. D.	REV. THOMAS ARMITAGE, D. D.
REV. THOMAS S. HASTINGS, D. D.	REV. CHARLES H. PARKHURST, D. D.
REV. CHARLES CUTHBERT HALL.	REV. GEORGE E. REED, D. D.
REV. HENRY M. STORRS, D. D.	REV. CHARLES E. ROBINSON, D. D.
REV. WESLEY R. DAVIS, D. D.	

Entertainment will be provided for members of the Council, who are requested to notify the Clerk of the Church on or before Saturday, January 11, if accommodation is desired for Wednesday as well as Thursday.





THE COUNCIL.

THE Council called by the foregoing letters missive met at Plymouth Church Sunday School Room on January 16, 1890, at 10:30, and was called to order by the Rev. E. P. Ingersoll. Rev. R. R. Meredith, D. D. was chosen Moderator, and R. D. Benedict, Scribe. After prayer by the Moderator the Roll was called and the following pastors and delegates were found to be in attendance.

Rochester Avenue Congregational Church: Rev. J. G. Roberts, D. D., John H. Boyce.

Park Congregational Church: Rev. M. Malcolm, A. A. Barclay.

New-England Congregational Church: Rev. W. H. Thomas, E. C. Wadsworth.

*Tabernacle Congregational Church: Rev. S. B. Halliday, E. E. Stewart.

East Congregational Church: S. M. Main.

Tompkins Avenue Congregational Church: Rev. R. R. Meredith, D. D.

Central Congregational Church: R. D. Benedict.

Clinton Avenue Congregational Church: Rev. T. B. McLeod, D. D., S. W. Johnson.

Puritan Congregational Church: Rev. E. P. Ingersoll, Geo. S. Bishop.

Lee Avenue Congregational Church: W. D. Chase.

Richmond Hill Congregational Church: Rev. W. R. Long, Geo. L. Crane.

Trinity Congregational Church, New-York: Rev. J. M. Whiton, Ph. D., Rev. Ellsworth Bonfils.

First Congregational Church, Jersey City: Rev. John L. Scudder, Wm. J. Hunt.

First Congregational Church, Montclair, New Jersey: Rev. A. H. Bradford, D. D., John R. Howard.

First Congregational Church, Upper Montclair: Rev. F. B. Vrooman, T. H. Bird.

First Congregational Church, Stamford, Conn.: Rev. Samuel Scoville, Dr. Lewis Hurlbut.

United Church of New Haven, Conn.: A. W. De Forest.

First Church, Hartford, Conn.: Lucius Curtis.

Asylum Hill Church, Hartford: Rev. J. H. Twichell, Abel S. Clark.

First Church, New Britain, Conn.: Rev. W. B. Wright, D. D.

Old South Church, Boston: Rev. G. A. Gordon, D. D., Hamilton A. Hill.

First Church, Cambridge, Mass.: Rev. A. McKenzie, D. D., Caleb H. Warner.

Piedmont Church, Worcester, Mass.: Rev. D. O. Mears, C. H. Hutchins.

Of the clergymen without charge invited to sit in the Council the following were present:

Edward Beecher, D. D., George P. Fisher, D. D., William J. Tucker, D. D.

The following clergymen, invited to sit with the Council and participate in its deliberations as honorary members, responded:

The Rev. Phillips Brooks and the Rev. E. Winchester Donald, D. D. (Episcopal); the Rev. Thomas Armitage, D. D. (Baptist); the Rev. Charles E. Robinson, D. D. (Presbyterian); the Rev. Wesley R. Davis, D. D. (Reformed); the Rev. George E. Reed, D. D. (Methodist Episcopal).

* Since called the Beecher Memorial Church.

Letters of regret were received from Prof. W. S. Tyler, of Amherst; Rev. G. L. Walker, D. D., of Hartford; Rev. M. M. Dana, of Lowell; Rev. Timothy Dwight, D. D., of New Haven; Rev. T. T. Munger, of New Haven; Rev. Thos. H. Hastings, D. D., of New-York; Rev. C. H. Hall, D. D., Rev. C. C. Hall and Rev. A. J. F. Behrends, D. D., of Brooklyn; Rev. C. H. Parkhurst, D. D., of New-York.

PRESIDENT DWIGHT'S LETTER.

NEW HAVEN, January 13, 1890.

My dear Dr. Abbott: I find that my engagements and duties here are such that I shall be unable to be present at the Council on Thursday, and therefore with regret I write you this note. Professor Fisher is intending to be with you, I believe, and he will represent us and will convey to you my most kindly wishes. I trust that everything connected with the installation will pass off most pleasantly, and with the presence of so many prominent men as you are expecting I have no doubt that it will be so.

Let me express the hope that your ministry in Plymouth Church may be a most successful one in all the coming years, and that you may see very rich and abundant results of your Christian efforts.

With much regard, I am, yours very truly,

TIMOTHY DWIGHT.

PROF. TYLER'S LETTER.

AMHERST COLLEGE, AMHERST, MASS., January 3, 1890.

My dear Friends: It was very kind of you to see that I was invited to a membership in the Council of Plymouth Church, and to accompany the letter missive with such urgent invitations to take a part in the services. It is very hard to resist such invitations, backed by so many sacred memories; but I do not think it prudent or safe for me to undertake the journey and the service in addition to all the ordinary and extraordinary labors which now devolve upon me.

It is with sincere and lively regret, therefore, that I feel under the necessity of returning a negative answer.

With kindest regards for both of you personally and the best wishes for the prosperity and usefulness of Plymouth Church, I am,

Most sincerely and gratefully yours,

W. S. TYLER.

Rev. Dr. Abbott and Mr. Howard S. Bliss.

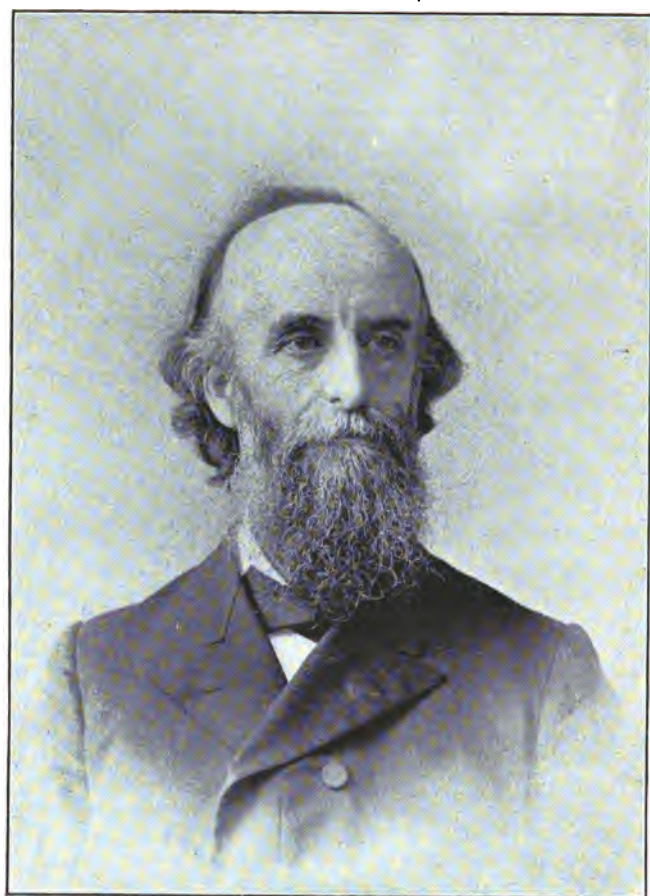
REV. MR. HALL'S LETTER.

NO. 128 HENRY STREET, BROOKLYN, January 15, 1890.

THE REV. LYMAN ABBOTT, D. D.

My dear Dr. Abbott: I have been confined to my house for a week with a severe cold, and notwithstanding the utmost caution I am not sufficiently recovered to attend the Council at Plymouth Church to-morrow. My physician has this afternoon forbidden me to indulge in this pleasure. It will therefore be impossible for me to fulfill the pleasant duty assigned me—that of making a brief speech after supper. I am greatly and permanently disappointed, and I beg that you and Rev. Mr. Bliss and Plymouth Church will do me the favor to accept this expression of my regret on being absent from an occasion so fraught with interest and so luminous with promise.

As the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn, I should have felt the joy of an *ancestral* privilege in standing in the lecture-room of Plymouth Church to speak words of greeting to Plymouth's ministers. For upon the ground now occupied by the lecture-room of Plymouth Church stood the edifice erected by the founders of the First Presbyterian Church. That edifice was, as you know, sold to Plymouth Church when the First Church removed to its present home in Henry street under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Cox, and was afterwards destroyed by fire. We are therefore, dear sir, bound to Plymouth Church as the traditional possessors of their sacred soil, and by many other ties more personal—by the kind and



Lyman Abbott.

generous relations ever sustained by our official boards, and, if I may be permitted the remark, by Mr. Beecher's constant kindness to myself, and by your own un-failing and cordial courtesy.

I assure you, dear sir, as the representative of the First Church, that a most cordial and earnest sentiment of fraternal interest fills me as I contemplate the noble possibilities of Plymouth Church under the combined labors of Mr. Bliss and you. The people of your charge have shown that which is the most creditable to themselves and to you in rising up from their grief, after losing their unique and magnificent leader, Mr. Henry Ward Beecher—to undertake so nobly the perpetuation of that church life dear to his heart.

I have the honor to remain, dear sir, faithfully yours,

CHS. CUTHBERT HALL.

Mr. Thomas G. Shearman then read to the Council the minutes of Plymouth Church in relation to the call of Rev. Lyman Abbott, D. D., to be its pastor, and of Rev. Howard S. Bliss to be its assistant pastor. He also announced the concurrence of the society in the action of the church. The Council voted that the minutes presented were satisfactory. Dr. Abbott then presented to the Council a certificate of his membership in Plymouth Church, a certificate of membership in the New-York and Brooklyn Association, a certificate of his license to preach given by the Somerset and Franklin Association, and a certificate of his ordination by a council in Farmington. The Council voted that these papers were satisfactory.

Dr. Abbott then read a statement of doctrine as follows :

DR. ABBOTT'S STATEMENT OF BELIEF.

To be a Christian and to be a Christian minister—this was my desire from my childhood days. My earliest recollections are of preaching to a congregation of empty chairs with two elder brothers, who had no reverence for the cloth, and who, as choir, insisted on practicing their music while I preached my sermon. Thus from a very early day I learned to bear two common ministerial burdens—an empty house and an irreverent choir. In one boarding-school I helped to organize a little prayer-meeting; in another, my room-mate and myself had family prayers. He was an Episcopalian, I a Congregationalist; we sometimes used the prayer-book, sometimes extemporaneous prayer. But my boyhood's idea of religion was one which I have been fighting ever since: to be religious I thought was to try to do right, to fail, to be sorry, and to hope that, for Christ's sake, a strict God would relax a little his strictness, and let me off. Where this idea came from I cannot tell. Certainly not from my father, who was both liberal and spiritual in his theology. I suspect it is a survival, not of Puritanism, but of that paganism which is inherent in us all. I was not often sorry enough to satisfy my ideal of repentance. So at dusk, when the gathering twilight, the song of the whippoorwill, and the concert of the frogs in the adjoining marsh all tended to sadness, I used to retire to my room, recall all the naughty things I had done during the day, and try to evolve a "conviction of sin." I did not succeed very well. The fact is, I was a rather feeble boy, with weak passions, a recluse nature, small temptations, a great fear of my own conscience, and rarely or ever did do anything very wicked. But I was often very wretched because I could not make myself wretched.

Such religion gave me very little satisfaction, and I naturally grew skeptical, first about my own religious experience, then about all religion. I doubted everything except the existence of a personal God and of my own spiritual nature. I took to reading theology, studied Emmons and Edwards in vacation, laid out for myself a course founded on Pearson on the Creed, made some progress in theology, but none in religion. At seventeen I graduated from college, knowing in most branches about enough to enter, but being better acquainted with religious philosophy than most boys of my age. I had always hoped to join the church when I should be fit, saw little reason to think that I was growing fitter, and about the time of my graduation, under the influence of a loved and sainted aunt — my mother had died in my childhood, and I had never had a real home — I joined the Mercer Street Presbyterian Church in New-York City, much as I imagine a conscientious Roman Catholic is confirmed, in a vague hope that in the church I might find rest. Two years later I came to live with an elder brother in Brooklyn, and took my letter to Plymouth Church.

Under the influence of Mr. Beecher's preaching my theological conceptions and my religious experience gradually changed. I came to think of God no longer as Justice tempered with reluctant mercy, but as Love; of Christ, not as a restraint on Divine Justice, but as a revelation of Divine Compassion; of religion, not as an ebb and flow of feeling, but as a life of joyous, because grateful and love-inspired, service. To Mr. Beecher I owe a debt of ever unpayable gratitude for the spiritual vision and the spiritual impulse which changed the fabric of my being and the current of my life. No man, except only my own father, has exerted so profound and so blessed an influence on my spiritual nature. I should be the most ungrateful of men if I did not, on every fitting occasion, bear glad testimony to my love and my reverence for my former pastor. How long I was under Mr. Beecher's preaching I do not remember with accuracy — about four or five years. As the new experience took possession of me the old desire to preach revived. I was a partner with my two older brothers in a successful and increasing law business; I was married and had one child; I was reluctant to throw away all the business advantages I possessed and begin life anew; but the desire grew too strong to be resisted. I left the law, went with my wife and child to Maine, put myself under the instruction of an uncle settled in my old village home, studied theology — chiefly, however, the New Testament — under his direction, and learned homiletics by practicing on a small but patient congregation in a neighboring village, and tested the value of my sermons by the length of time I could keep one constitutional and chronic sleeper in the pews awake. My previous theological studies and my Bible-class teaching in Plymouth Sunday-school served as a preparatory course, and after less than a year exclusively devoted to theological study I was ordained as an evangelist in the village church with which were associated my earliest religious instructions, and went West to take my first pastorate in Terre Haute, Ind. Following the advice of Mr. Beecher, confirmed by Professor Stowe, Dr. Kirke, and Dr. Thompson, I spent all the little money I had in the purchase of Robinson's "Greek Lexicon," "The Englishman's Greek Concordance," and Alford's "Greek Testament." And these books, with a few which

had come down to me from the somewhat antiquated collection of a ministerial uncle deceased, constituted my entire library. For the first three or four years of my pastoral life my exclusive studies, apart from special pulpit preparation, were in the Four Gospels. These studies laid the foundation for a "Life of Christ" published in 1869, and for a Commentary on the New Testament now in course of publication. From that day to this my theological studies have been almost exclusively in the Bible, perhaps I should say in the New Testament. Historical theology I have studied a little; dogmatic theology scarcely at all. Whether my theology is Biblical in its contents and spirit or no, it is almost exclusively Biblical in its origin. It is the one desire of my life—in book, newspaper, periodical, platform, pulpit—to apply to all the various problems of life the precepts and principles inculcated by Jesus Christ, and to infuse into life—first into my own, and then into all lives which I am permitted to influence—something of his spirit.

Theology grows out of experience. The Apostles' Creed is not formulated till after some centuries of Apostolic life and work; Calvin's severe conscience leads him to be dubbed the Accusative in school; Luther learns the doctrine of justification by faith while climbing Pilate's Staircase; the Methodists practice religion in Oxford before they preach it to the colliers. Thus every vital theology is partial, because every experience is imperfect. My theological views, as my Christian experiences, all grow out of, first, the revolution wrought in my experience by Mr. Beecher's preaching of Christ as the revelation of a God of love; and, secondly, out of a lifelong study of Christ's character and teachings, as simply narrated in the Four Gospels, as more fully and philosophically expounded by Paul in his letters.

My faith in God rests on my faith in Christ as God manifest in the flesh—not as God *and* man, but as God *in* man. It is true that the argument for a Creator from the creation is by modern science modified only to be strengthened. The doctrine of a great first cause gives place to the doctrine of an eternal and perpetual cause; the carpenter conception of creation to the doctrine of the divine immanence; the Latin notion of anthropomorphic Jupiter, renamed Jehovah, made to dwell in some bright particular star, and holding telephonic communication with the spheres by means of invisible wires which sometimes fail to work, dies, and the old Hebrew conception of a Divinity which inhabiteth eternity, and yet dwells in the heart of the contrite and the humble, takes its place. But the teleological argument is strengthened, not weakened, by the doctrine of evolution; creation is more, not less, creation because it is the thought, not the mere handiwork, of God. It is not possible even to state the doctrine of an atheistic creation without using the language of theism in the statement. But the heart finds no refuge in an Infinite and an Eternal Energy from which all things proceed. That refuge is found only in the faith that God has entered a human life, taken the helm, ruled heart and hand and tongue, written in terms of human experience the biography of God in history, revealed in the teaching of Christ the truth of God, in the life of Christ the righteousness of God, in the Passion of Christ the suffering of God. That God is in nature, filling it with himself as the spirit fills the body with its omnipresence,

so that all nature-forces are but expressions of the divine will, and all nature-laws but habits of divine action—this is the doctrine of the Fatherhood. That God was in Christ, so that what Jesus Christ was seen to be in the three short years of his public life that God is in his eternal administration of the universe—this is the doctrine of the Divine Sonship. That God is in human experience, guiding, illuminating, inspiring, making all willing souls sons of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ—this is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. And this threefold faith is the doctrine of the Trinity, stated in terms of my personal experience. Thus this Christ is the manifestation of God, not of certain attributes of God or certain phases of his administration. There is no justice to be found in God that was not manifested in Christ; no mercy to attract in Christ that is not eternally in God. He who suffered, he who redeems, he will judge. I am not afraid to trust myself, my friends, or the heathen in his hands; those hands that were pierced for sinners. My eschatology is all summed up in one faith: Christ shall come to judge the world. The dogma of the decisive nature of this world's probation for every man I repudiate as unscriptural. The hypothesis that Christ will be presented in another life to all who have not known him here I do not accept, for lack of evidence to support it. I cannot offer to any man a hope of future repentance, whether this side or the other of the grave. But I refuse to believe that the accident of death transmutes God's mercy into wrath and makes repentance impossible, and so closes the door of hope upon the soul forever. What may be the resources of God's mercy in the future I do not know, and shrink from the dogmatism which attempts to define them. The most awful fact of human life is the power of the human soul to accept God or reject him as it will. What God may do in the future to overcome the choice of evil I do not know; but I am sure that he will never violate the sacred freedom of the soul and so destroy man in seeming to save him, and never attach other than darkness and death to persistent sin. But I am not less sure that "his mercy endureth forever," and that no soul will be left in the outer darkness which that mercy can call into the light; that the end of Christ's redeeming work comes not until he delivers up the kingdom to God and the Father, has all things put under his feet, and is himself subject unto him that put all things under him that God may be all in all; and that when that glad day comes, the song of rejoicing will rise from every creature in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea. If there are then any voices not joining in that choral of redeeming love I believe it will be because they are silent in that second death from which there is no resurrection. Endless conscious sin I do not believe in. I could endure the thought of endless suffering; but not of sin growing ever deeper, darker, more awful. It has grown to me unthinkable; I believe it is unscriptural.

For my conception of sin depends also upon and has grown out of my faith in and love for Christ. That conviction of sin which I in vain endeavored artificially to evoke in my childhood days has grown unsummoned in my heart. When I joined the church a good elder asked me what I thought of sin in connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. I did not know that it had any connection with the Lord Jesus

Christ, and I did not understand his question, and told him so. I understand it now. When I think how sin deranges and destroys such a nature as Christ has made illustrious, that it is sin against such a love as he has manifested, that it estranges and separates from such a God as he reveals, sin seems to me a more awful penalty than any which can be inflicted because of it, and to save from sin an infinitely diviner work than to save from any consequences which it may involve, natural or inflicted, here or hereafter. The motive of my personal life, the inspiration of my Christian activity, is not fear of pain and penalties, but horror of sin and love for Christ.

On my faith in Christ rests also my faith in the Bible. The Bible is the casket which contains the image of my Lord—that is enough; whether it be lead or silver or gold is matter of minor concern. There are modern writers on law that may be as valuable as Moses; there are poems of Browning and Tennyson and our own Whittier which are far more pervaded with the Christlike spirit than some in the Hebrew Psalmody. But there is no life like the life of Christ; and the Law and the Prophets are sacred because they point to and prepare for him; and the Gospels sacred because they tell the story of his incomparable life; and the Epistles sacred because they interpret that life as continuous in the experience of his Church. The Bible is unique and incomparable in literature, because it is the history of the revelation of God in human experience, beginning with the declaration that God made man in his own image, bringing out in law, history, drama, poetry, prophecy, that divine image more and more clearly, until it reaches its consummation in the portrait of Him who was the express image of God's Person and the brightness of his glory. So my faith in the miracles rests also on my faith in Christ—he himself a greater miracle by far than any attributed to him. That beneficent power should have flashed from such a Christ, that death should be powerless to hold such a Christ in the grave, that angels should have announced his coming and proclaimed his resurrection—all this seems to me natural and easy to believe; as easy to believe in these scintillations of divinity from the Person of Christ as to believe in scintillations of genius from a Shakspeare or a Dante. I accept the Christian miracles as adequately attested by competent witnesses. I count the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the best attested fact of ancient history, itself attesting his divinity and inaugurating that life of his in his Church which carries on to its consummation the kingdom of God. But my faith in Christ rests, not on the miracles, but on Christ himself. Even as he wrought them he declared them to be but inferior evidences of his divinity. Their subordinate importance is clearer than ever, now that they are no longer wonders which we witness, but the histories of wonders witnessed by others. To believe in Christ—that the Father is in him, and he is in the Father—this is Christian faith. The spirit which in the modern Church has sometimes sought to found Christian faith on signs and wonders appears to me to be almost as much one of unbelief as the spirit which outside the Church denies the miraculous altogether. Miracles are witnesses to Divinity; Revelation is the unveiling of Divinity: but Christ is himself Divinity; and he who accepts Christ—who loves him, reverences him, obeys him, follows him, lives to be like him—is Christ's

disciple, however illogical may seem to me to be his philosophy about natural and revealed religion, about nature and the supernatural.

My faith in immortality also rests upon Christ — upon his word, his resurrection. I am coming to distrust all mere philosophical arguments for personal immortality, and to rely upon One who professed to be a witness, to testify to the things which he had seen and heard, to have come from God and to be going to God. When he tenderly appeals to me, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," my heart responds, "I do believe," and what he says I accept because he is a faithful and true witness. On this and on every other spiritual theme I more and more distrust the vaunted "scientific method," and more and more rest upon personal faith in the Christ of God, bearing a witness confirmed by the experience of God in my own soul. And I more and more incline to believe that immortality is not the universal attribute of humanity — that God alone hath immortality; and we have it only as here or hereafter we are made partakers of the divine nature.

It can hardly be necessary to add that my hope for myself and for the world rests on Christ; that is, on the helpfulness of God as manifested in Christ. The two theories of life which seem to me to be contending in our age are essentially the same which have been contending ever since the days of Paul — the pagan and the Christian. Pagan philosophy allows man no higher faculty than the senses and the reason; Christian philosophy endows him with a mystic sense which perceives the invisible. Pagan philosophy casts him on his own resources, if it does not deny him even free will and make him the creature of the forces which environ him. Christianity believes in the power of Infinite Love above, which is drawing humanity to itself. In the pagan philosophy there is no room for revelation, miracles, atonement, regeneration, divinity of Christ, presence of the Holy Spirit, prayer. Granted the Christian postulate — a God in Christ drawing the world to himself — and revelation or the unveiling of God, miracles or witnesses to God, atonement or reconciliation to God, regeneration or the beginning of the life of God in the soul of man, the Holy Spirit or the presence of God with men, prayer or the communion of men with God — all follow. This Christian faith is my faith; and because I believe that there is in it a hope for every form of human despair I have given my life to its proclamation. Redemption is not, to my thought, a mere recovery of man from a fall and his restoration to a primal state of innocence. It is the development of the individual soul, and so of the race, from childhood's innocence, through fall, temptation, sin, and grace, to a divine and manly virtue. Forgiveness is not a remission of penalty, which may be remitted or may remain, but a remission of sin, a personal cleansing and purification, often through punishment, often without it. Sacrifice is not necessary to *induce* God to remit penalty — it is not an expiation; nor is it necessary to *enable* God to remit penalty — it is not a substitution. Sacrifice is the only door by which a nobler and better nature can enter the heart and life of a lower and unworthier one, and lift it out of itself into a higher life. The sacrifices of the Old Testament are instruments not of pardon but of purification. The blood of the New Covenant is shed for many for the remission, not of penalty, but of sin.

That blood is nowhere said to release from all punishments; it is said to cleanse from all sin. In it is revealed the heart of a suffering God who bears forever the sins of the whole world. It is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, who takes away the sin of the world. And, finally, atonement or reconciliation is not a transaction outside of man, taking down some eternal and imaginary wall between the soul and God; it is a fellowship with God and with his Son Jesus Christ; begun when the soul, touched by the divine sorrow for man's sins, knows the fellowship of that suffering, being made conformable unto Christ's death; carried on when, inspired by the divine purpose and transfigured by the divine Spirit, the soul enters upon the divine life of self-sacrifice, and endeavors to fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of the Christ; to be perfected only when the soul awakes, after life's fitful fever, in his likeness, and is satisfied because at last Christ's prayer is fulfilled: "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

I might, brethren, have presented to you a theological statement which would have been both more comprehensive and more compact; but it would have been less my own. My theology has changed in the past, and will change in the future; but if the past be an augury of the future, it will change only to make Christ more central. It is imperfect, and always will be; for we know in part and we prophesy in part, and the truth of God is known in its entirety by none of us. But as the years go by, and creeds are less, faith and hope and love are more to me: the faith that looks with ever clearer vision upon the invisible and eternal, while all things earthly and temporal grow more shadowy; the hope that amid all the wreckage of life hears ever, like a bird-song in the tempest, "All things work together for good to them that love God"; and the love which counts all humanity one great brotherhood, because children of that father of whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

At the close of Dr. Abbott's paper, the roll being called, the following pastors and delegates availed themselves of the opportunity to ask questions:

Question by Dr. McLEOD—I should like to ask what is his view of the Church, and what is his conception of the basis of Church fellowship?

Answer.—That Christ has left his disciples to form their own organizations for carrying on the work which he has left them to do, giving them only the obligation to organize for that work; that they have a right to organize in whatever way they see fit, and that the Episcopal, the Congregational, the Presbyterian, the Dutch Reformed, are all equally "apostolic," provided they have all equally the apostolic spirit in them.

Ques.—Your idea of the basis of fellowship among Congregational churches is what?

Ans.—My ideal would be of a fellowship among all churches of Christ on the simple basis of loyalty to Jesus Christ, but I have long since learned to adjust myself to other people's ideals, and not to carry out my own. My conception ecclesiastically is that each Congregational church is independent, having entire authority to determine its

own correct government, election of officers and administration; that all Congregational churches that are enough in spirit with one another to coöperate and work together should coöperate and work together in their common interests and for common ends, and that as it is the privilege of each church to determine what its government and methods shall be, so it is the privilege of other churches, if they do not like the way in which that church conducts its affairs, to leave it alone. In other words, to cease to fellowship it.

Question by Dr. INGERSOLL—You remarked that you did not believe that the sacrifice of Christ was made in order to appease. What will you say to the words “propitiate” and “propitiation,” which are used in God’s Word?

Ans.—The word propitiation in Romans iii: 25, is, properly speaking, Mercy Seat; that is, it is the same Greek word which in the Septuagint is used as Mercy Seat. And although I am aware that the majority of Greek scholars do not think it has that meaning there, I differ from them. I think the signification carried to the Hebrew mind is the Mercy Seat, and Christ’s propitiation is represented there and everywhere in Paul’s Epistle as the point wherein man and God came together as they did in the Mercy Seat.

Question by Dr. MCKENZIE—I wish Dr. Abbott would be kind enough to state in a few words his views of the Trinity. He simply summed it up?

Ans.—When I entered the Presbyterian Church I was asked a somewhat analogous question—I was troubled on that subject, and I went to Dr. Prentiss. I said, “I find in the Creed the statement, there are Three Persons in one God, three in substance and one in essence” (I always have to stop to think whether it is three in substance and one in essence or one in substance and three in essence); and I said to him, “I don’t know what those words mean. They do not throw any light in my mind. I believe there is but one God; I accept the Father; I worship the Son; I worship and accept the Holy Spirit, and I do not think there are three Gods. I think there is one God, and that is all I know about it.” And he said, “That is all any of us know about it.” On that I was received into the Church. I have thought since that I wished I had asked if that is all they know about it why they had not put it in the Creed. That is all I know about it to this day. It is a matter of personal experience. I do not use the word “Trinity,” and I do not use the phraseology “Three Persons in one God,” or “essence” or “substance,” because I do not find them helpful to other people’s minds at the present time, and they are not helpful to my own. To me there is one Divine Spirit who fills all the universe with his omnipresence, and in him I believe as the Universal Father. I find him dwelling in a human life and filling that perfectly with himself, so that in that human life I see the image and representative of God coming down to men and dwelling in them, and I worship that as the Son. I find him coming into my own experience with comfort and light and help, and I worship him therein as the Spirit. And then when I am asked, “What are the relations of these three to one another?” I say that God is so great and I am so small that I do not know anything about it.

Question by Dr. MEARS—I should like to ask Dr. Abbott if he will state the relation between sin and the theory of conditional immortality. The reference was made in a minor degree. I should like to hear it?

Ans.—I distinguish in my own mind clearly between my opinion, or hypothesis, and my convictions, or articles of faith. My opinion, or hypothesis, is that man is to be regarded as possessing a three-fold nature—body, soul, and spirit; that the immortality belongs to the spiritual nature, not to the intellectual and the social separated from the spiritual; that the spiritual nature is immortal only as it keeps its connection with God, as light would go on in the earth only as it kept its connection with the sun; that sin is separation from God, as the earth might be imagined to draw off from its orbit and wander from the sun; that every sin is one act of separation from God; and finally that a complete separation from God carries with it inevitable death—simply death. What that is I do not undertake to define, but I think on the whole there is more reason to regard it as the extinction of being than as a continuance in a state of conscious wickedness and conscious suffering.

Ques.—There is a statement in John's Epistle: "there is a sin unto death," etc. Do I understand that when the spiritual life is lost without possibility of repentance and recovery in this life the man is no longer a man, body, soul, and spirit?

Ans.—I do not think I am wise enough to answer that question. I will say, however, that it seems to me, both from observation and also from Scripture, that there is an invisible line which the soul may pass, after which there is no hope that it will return to God. Where that line is I do not know, and I do not think it safe to define it. I do not think, on the one hand, it is safe to say that it never is found this side the grave; I do not think, on the other hand, it is safe to say it is never found on the other.

Question by Dr. ARMITAGE—I wish the Doctor would expound to us a little more fully what he means by the constant use of the word "experience," because in connection with experience he stated, as I understand, that all theology springs from experience, making a distinction between religion and theology. I was at a loss to know whether he meant simply human consciousness by experience, or a religious life appealing to that consciousness. I wish the Doctor could make that point clear, so that we may understand exactly what the source of theology is?

Ans.—The statement "God is love" is a dogmatic statement. What it means will depend upon what measure of experience of love I have had. It will awaken one sensation or experience in one man's soul, and another sensation or experience in another man's soul. In that text, therefore, that simple declaration will mean as many different things as there are different people in the room. It will not mean the same thing to any two different persons, literally and exactly. I am taught to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven." God gave me the best of fathers. It is therefore the most natural and the most beautiful access to God; but to a waif or a stray picked up in the street, who never has known a father, or only a brutal and drunken one—it will mean very little to him until he comes into some other know,

ledge of fatherhood than that. All our theology therefore is interpreted by our experience, and all our theology grows out of our experience. It is the attempt to state in philosophical forms the spiritual life of the soul, an attempt which never can be satisfactory, never can be adequate, and yet must always be carried on. I do not know whether I have met the question or whether I have answered it.

Question by Dr. REED—I would like to ask Dr. Abbott to define a little more fully what he meant by the phrase “not God and man, but God in man,” in what sense he wishes us to understand he is in man as differing from God in men generally?

Ans.—God *and* man calls to my thought, perhaps incorrectly, the notion which I used to have, certainly, of two distinct beings—God and man—mysteriously joined together, and doing some things as God and some things as man, according to the statement of one old commentator, who says that he wept at the grave of Lazarus as man, and commanded Lazarus to come forth as God; that he hungered as man, and multiplied the bread as God, and so on. That conception I do not accept, because it gives me neither God nor man. It is neither the perfect man, whose model I can follow, nor the perfect God, in whom I can trust. So far as I can formulate, frankly saying at the outset that no psychology of Christ is perfect, it is that God tabernacled among men, or, to use another word, that God was manifest in the flesh. God entered into a human life, and perfectly possessed it. It differed from the way in which he enters into my life, because my personality, my will, my separation from God, my sinning, make all the manifestation of God in me adumbrated, false, and imperfect. In Christ there was the perfect possession of the human life by the Divine Spirit, so that all the thought and life of Christ was the thought and life of God in the world at that time, and all that runs back into the time when God created man in his own image, not physical nature in his own image, and that it is therefore in human experience that we are to look; for, though we see as in a glass darkly, we are to look for the image and representation and translation of God to our own spirits.

Question by Dr. MEARS—May I ask Dr. Abbott if he will give his theory of inspiration, and the relation of inspiration to revelation?

Ans.—The general theory of inspiration is that God is brooding over the whole human race, knocking on all human hearts, and evolving out of humanity a divine life by his own fatherly influence upon them. That all men, in the measure in which they receive God, receive an inbreathing of God into themselves. That nations have their peculiarities as well as individuals, and that the peculiarity of the Hebrew race was, as compared with the other races round about them, that it was a religious race that did open its mind and heart and thought to God, not largely and ideally, but a great deal better than any of the races round about. That the Bible is the simple literature of that Hebrew race; that it contains the noblest and divinest experience of the noblest and divinest men of the noblest and divinest race sifted out of centuries of providential dealing; and in that way it is the divine representation of the divine life and thought as it has shown itself in human experience, and so becomes a standard and guide for the human thought and life of the ages. The revelation is the unveiling





Howard S. Bliss.

of God, and it is the unveiling of God in and through human experience by means of inspiration. Inspiration is the means to the end, and the end is revelation, and that which makes the Bible the sacred book it is is the fact that in and through the Bible God is unveiled, and the minds which have had the Bible have a knowledge of God which other minds have not.

It was then voted that the Council be by itself. The Council being by itself, after remarks by various members it was voted "that the Council approve of the action of Plymouth Church in calling Dr. Abbott, and is ready to proceed to the installation of Dr. Abbott." Dr. Abbott was sent for, and on his coming before the Council was informed of this action.

Rev. Dr. McLeod withdrew from the Council before the above action was unanimously taken. In a letter to Dr. Abbott, since published, Dr. McLeod explained that his withdrawal "was not due to want of confidence in and respect for yourself as a Christian brother," but because "participation in the installation, whatever it might mean to others, meant to me an endorsement of views which seem to me unsound and unsafe."

The afternoon session was called to order by the Moderator at 3 o'clock. Rev. Dr. Wright of New Britain offered prayer. Mr. Bliss presented certificates of membership in Plymouth Church, of membership in the Association of New-York and Brooklyn Congregational Churches, and of licensure to preach by the New-York Presbytery.

As to his personal religious experiences and the causes which led to his entering the ministry, Mr. Bliss spoke as follows: "I was brought up in a home where religious influences were always felt, and I can point to no time when I assumed an entirely new attitude toward Christianity. I did not join the church until I entered college, at the age of 17, although I felt some desire to do so previous to that time. My intention to enter the ministry was not formulated at any particular time, but after joining the church during the course of my college life I felt that it would be well—that I ought to enter the Christian ministry. That purpose grew upon me during my college course and during the two years that I spent in teaching after leaving college, and finally decided me to enter the seminary. I do not know, Mr. Moderator, that it will be necessary to make any further statement." The speaker then made this formal exposition of belief:

MR. BLISS'S STATEMENT OF BELIEF.

I WAS born and brought up in the belief that there is a God. Reflection and experience have strengthened this belief. If to-day my belief as to the nature of God is less precise in its form, it is more intense in its reality. If it defines less, it means more. I believe in a God who is transcendent, immanent, infinite in being, and infinite in perfection. This belief of my childhood has been strengthened by reflection. I consider myself—the facts given me by self-consciousness. I find ringing within me an imperious call to righteousness—recognize that life will be incomplete, that its object cannot be realized

unless this call to a higher life is obeyed. Instinctively I turn to an absolute righteousness—the source of my impulse, the object of my impulse—one to whom I can pour out my gratitude for this great gift of moral life; one upon whom I can lean in my dependence, one whom I must fear in my disobedience. The very existence of the good within me leads me to God; the feeling of need, of dependence, drives me to God. And similarly of the demands of truth and of beauty; the existence of an impulse within me to seek for truth and for beauty—my own limitations in this search; lead me to a God that is absolute truth, absolute beauty.

Experience, too, has strengthened the belief of my childhood—the history of individuals, the history of peoples. Syllogistic arguments—the ontological, cosmological, teleological, moral—lend, in my opinion, support to the argument from consciousness.

The nature of this Being, incomprehensible though he be, has become, I believe, clearer as the history of man's life has progressed. Wherever God is awakening the soul's forces among men, wherever the history of man's higher life has been written, there do we learn something of God; for there, I believe, God has been revealing himself. We learn most of God where man has put himself most completely under the divine guidance. I believe that God has revealed himself most fully, though by no means exclusively, among the Hebrews, and therefore I turn with especial interest and especial reverence to the record of their religious experience; and this unique experience is recorded in the Bible. All men who unaffectedly submit themselves to the leading of God are, I believe, inspired—inspired with very great differences in degree, but still inspired. I believe God stands ready to inspire men in all work pertaining to the development of the life planted in them by him—the life intellectual, æsthetic, moral. In so far as the Bible deals with the history of a nation interested in developing this higher life, and is written by men so interested, do I hold it to be inspired—variously inspired, but still inspired. While this might be said of many books, I believe the Bible to be a unique book, recording as it does the religious history of a unique people—a people whose preëminent concern for the spiritual life led to its being made the recipient of God's special inspiration and revelation.

I hold the Bible to be a trustworthy account of this self-revelation of God. I believe that it should be subjected to the severest tests of both the Lower and the Higher Criticism, that its full truth and significance as the history of redemption and sanctification may be exhibited, and any admixture of error may be avoided.

This Bible interprets for me the nature of God. It teaches me that the divine essence is a unity, indivisible, unchangeable, but that its unity does not exclude a richness, a multifoldness, a multiplicity, a variety, in which this one essence exists. I remember that God is infinite, incomprehensible; but, though I cannot explain, I find no insuperable difficulty in the belief that the infinite divine essence exists, in its internal relations, in different modes at the same time. Of these different modes the Bible recognizes, I believe, three—the Father, Word, and Holy Spirit. I find, however, no philosophical necessity for limiting these modes—in which the whole essence subsists at the

same time—to three; and hence I do not use the word trinity in an exclusive sense. I believe these modes exist from all eternity, but have become manifested only as the development of the race in religious susceptibility warranted this revelation or made it possible. I believe that all revelation is to this end—that man may know the mind of God and conform his life to this mind. But God's mind has always been the same. From all eternity has he known that sin would enter the universe. From all eternity has his hatred of sin been intense, just because his love of righteousness is supreme. From all eternity his heart has overflowed with pardoning love. But it costs to pardon; for it costs that there should be occasion for pardon—that there should be alienation from God. Measure the holiness of God, measure his infinite sorrow at this yielding to sin, and you have measured the cost of divine pardon, the agony suffered before pardon could be granted. And this agony did not, I believe, begin two thousand years ago. God was not reconciled two thousand years ago. The incarnation was an episode, though an episode of immeasurable importance, in the self-revelation of God. It did not secure a change in God's attitude—it revealed the attitude of pardon which God has held from all eternity. The sufferings of God did not, I believe, begin, did not increase, with Bethlehem—did not end, did not diminish, with the ascension. I believe that the incarnation of the Word did not—could not, indeed—take place till the fullness of time had come, till the religious consciousness had become so developed as to comprehend measurably, though still very imperfectly, its meaning.

Men upon whom the spirit of God moved before the incarnation were saved not prospectively in Christ, but through God's eternal pardoning grace, the existence of which they realized, very imperfectly, indeed, but effectually.

I believe the Word became flesh—became Jesus Christ—God concealed and God revealed in the flesh; Jesus Christ, not God, but God under human limitations; Jesus Christ, not man, but man under unique divine inspirations. I hold to the Deity of the Word, the divinity of Jesus—the absolute Deity of the Word, the unique divinity of Jesus. How God became incarnate, how two natures existed in one Person, is a mystery I cannot solve, but it is a doctrine which I believe. The purpose of the incarnation was to continue the self-revelation of God's eternal dispositions toward man, to make clear his purpose of redemption and sanctification. The revelation was made to the Hebrew people “in the fullness of time”; but, in spite of the relative preparedness of the people to accept this revelation, its promulgation involved its Prophet in struggles which culminated in the agony at Gethsemane and in the death on Calvary. Hence, suffering was necessary, the death on the cross was necessary, if God's pardoning love, if his purpose in creation, were at this time to be revealed. At other times, under other circumstances, among other peoples, the revelation of this pardoning love need not have been attended with the same kind of suffering as that endured by the historic Christ. Suffering there must have been so long as sin existed, but the forms and extent might have differed. The *eternal* suffering is not thereby affected. The Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world. The incarnation was needed—not to enable God to understand man, but that man might

understand God. It was the clearest projection in time of God's mind in eternity. It was the brightest reflection the earth had yet seen of God's love. Through all eternity, through all time, that light had been shining. Man's self-blinded eyes had hitherto prevented him from clearly perceiving that of which he was vaguely sensible, and after which he darkly groped. Those who trusted Christ's Evangel received the pardon which, because of man's sin, costs the Godhead so much.

I believe that the providence of God, by which he executes his eternal purpose, is in and over all events; that he has fore-ordained whatever comes to pass; yet so that the freedom and responsibility of man are not impaired, and sin is the act of the creature alone. The awful problem of suffering and sin I believe to be, in its last analysis, insoluble. Philosophically, a single instant of sin is as difficult for me to account for as an eternity of sin. Theodicies are helpful, but are not exhaustive. I believe that God is infinitely good; that sin is infinitely damnable; that God is mightier than Satan; and that the kingdom of the good is a triumphant kingdom.

I believe in the possibility, the reality, and the efficacy of prayer.

I believe that every man has a knowledge of good and evil; that he is aware of an obligation to follow the good and shun the evil; but that an effectual desire and a sufficient will-power to follow the good come from God alone. I believe man's supreme object should be to seek and live truth in all its fullness; that the conditions necessary to this search are sincerity of purpose and humility of attitude; that all men, in all ages, who in this spirit have sought to find the fullness of truth and to realize it in their lives belong to the Kingdom of God.

I believe that God's self-revelation in all its forms has had, is having, and will have as its object the establishment of this Kingdom of God, in which all that is good and true and beautiful in man's soul shall receive its harmonious and perfect development; that redemption from sin is but the first step in the establishment of this kingdom in men's hearts; that, absolutely indispensable as is this work of redemption, our conception of God's self-revelation must be ultimately not Christo-centric but Theo-centric, because the godhead is a richer and truer view of God than the Word; that our conception of God's kingdom must be not simply, not mainly, salvation and freedom from sin, but advance in all that is Godlike, whether æsthetic, intellectual, or moral.

I believe that, while all time is sacred, it is expedient and wise to observe Sunday as a day of holy rest, refreshment, and worship.

I believe in the two sacraments instituted by Christ — Baptism as the sign of cleansing from sin, of union with God, and of the impartation of the Holy Spirit; and the Lord's Supper as a symbol of God's pardoning love, a seal of its efficacy, and a means whereby he confirms and strengthens the spiritual union and communion of believers with himself.

I believe that it is right and expedient for the children of God to associate themselves in churches for the maintenance of worship, for the promotion of spiritual growth and fellowship, and for the conversion of men; that these churches may determine, each for itself, their

organization, statements of belief, and forms of worship, may appoint and set apart their own ministers, and should coöperate with each other in promoting the higher life throughout the world.

I believe in the immortality of the soul; that man, by his practical attitude toward the demands of truth and righteousness in this life, himself determines his condition in the next, yet so that the omniscience and sovereign grace of God are not impaired, and sin is the act of the creature alone; that the souls of men who have yielded themselves to God's spirit, working in them, in the interest of holiness and truth, will advance to an ever richer and deeper knowledge of God, and of the meaning and realization of life; while those who have not so yielded will become subject, in an ever-increasing degree, to the supreme evil of self-alienation from God.

In presenting this statement of belief I do not claim to have reached a formulation of doctrine which shall be final. In my thinking I have endeavored to reach statements of truth which explain, not indeed all the facts presented by consciousness, experience, and history, but statements which best account for these facts, and which raise the fewest difficulties.

Imperfect as is the result, I await calmly and reverently the dawning of new truths, believing that the great Spirit of all Truth will reveal truth to those who seek it in sincerity of purpose and humility of spirit.

At the conclusion of Mr. Bliss's statement Dr. Meredith said: Will the Council pursue the method of this morning, and have the roll called, so that any who desire to put questions to the candidate may do so? If there be no objection that course will be pursued.

Mr. HALLIDAY — Are we now proceeding upon the paper presented to us, or is Mr. Bliss before us as a candidate for installation as assistant pastor?

The MODERATOR — The candidate is before you, the whole of him, and what you want to do is to find out how much there is of him, to reckon him up. The matter immediately before us is the statement which he has made, which is the basis of questions.

Dr. REED — I am perfectly satisfied with Brother Bliss's paper. I would like to know what his thought is about his obligations, or his relations, to the work he assumes; how far it is to absorb him, and is he to be swallowed up in the work he has entered. I would like to know what his thought is in regard to that matter?

Mr. BLISS — I feel that in assuming the profession of the ministry I have assumed obligations which devolve in general upon every Christian, but which it has been deemed expedient should devolve upon a certain number chosen from among Christians, for purposes of convenience, for the transaction of the interests of the kingdom of God most wisely and most efficiently. By that I mean that I believe in the priesthood of all believers, but that it is well that those be set aside, on the principle of division of labor, for the special work connected with the organization of a church, and I have offered myself for this work in the hope that I shall prove to be able to do that which I believe should be done for the best interests of God's kingdom.

Mr. HALLIDAY — In regard to your own ease, comfort, or pleasure, are they to be considered largely in your thoughts of the place you have entered ?

Ans. — No more and no less than they should enter into the thought of every Christian.

Mr. HALLIDAY — Supposing you got an invitation to go to Joppa or Mars Hill to preach, would n't it be very much in the line of your duty to go, or would you feel that you ought to stay at home and take care of your own flock ?

Ans. — That question would have to be decided and determined upon its merits. At present I am so near having made a decision of very much that nature that I feel at present that I can hardly think of a call to foreign missionary work which would strike me as more imperative than the call to work in Brooklyn. But I can conceive very easily of circumstances which would, in certain cases, produce a change of field in the general work of the ministry.

Mr. HALLIDAY — I do not mean change; take the basis of a given church or mission, is that to absorb and take your whole time ?

Ans. — Well, sir, I feel that the interests of the kingdom of God are the chief concern of every minister; that he must be more devoted to the building up of God's kingdom than to the building up of his own denomination or the building up of his own church; at the same time, I believe that the interests of God's kingdom can be best subserved by each man attending to his own work as completely and as carefully as possible; but always the primal and basal thought must be the building up of God's kingdom.

Dr. WHITON — I would like to make a single inquiry. Among the various doctrines of theological interest and of Christian teaching which, to your mind, is the central one ?

Ans. — The doctrine of inspiration.

Mr. SCOVILLE — Perhaps I do not understand, but, as I remember it, you said there were modes of existence in the divine nature, and that there were three recognized, and the brother said he saw no reason why that number should be limited to three; was that the right understanding of his words ?

Ans. — In making that statement I had reference to the philosophical argument for the Trinity, for which argument I do not profess very much regard.

Dr. WHITON — But do I understand that you do understand that there is taught that there are other modes of existence than three ?

Ans. — I believe that the divine essence is represented in three different modes in the Bible, and I believe that there is a tri-foldness of mode.

Dr. WHITON — And when you speak of other modes, you speak of it merely philosophically, and not Scripturally ?

Ans. — Yes, sir.

Dr. MEREDITH — With respect to the observance of the Lord's Day you use the words "wise and expedient" — "All time is sacred, and it is wise and expedient to set apart a day." With respect to the Christian Church you said that "it is right and expedient that believers should organize." What force do you give to those words ? do you use them in the ordinary sense of expediency, or do you recog-

nize the divine obligation with respect to the Lord's Day and with respect to the organization of the Church?

Ans.—I used these words in contradistinction to what I hold to be divinely necessary and a divine ordinance. I do not feel that I cannot conceive of a time when the setting apart of one day in seven would not be wise or expedient, because I believe in the sacredness of all time, and that the ideal is where we shall regard all days as sacred. As a matter of convenience and as a matter of expediency I feel that the setting apart of one day in seven is right and just and beneficial; I do not believe that the obligation to keep the Sabbath as it was promulgated on Sinai is binding upon us. With reference to the Church, I can conceive of a time when the organization of churches will not be necessary in the same sense that it is now.

Dr. MEREDITH — I have not said anything about the Sabbath; I have not used the word, nor said anything about the Fourth Commandment; but, with respect to the Lord's Day, do you recognize a divine obligation upon the people to-day to observe the Lord's Day in the way which you so clearly characterized as a day of rest and a day of worship?

Ans.—Yes, in the sense that there is divine obligation resting upon us to do everything that we think to be right and expedient and best for the progress of God's kingdom; in no other sense.

Dr. MEREDITH — Do you recognize — never mind about the ideal time that is to come when you and I won't be here — do you recognize now, as resting upon us to-day, an obligation, and I mean a divine obligation, to thoroughly organize our churches for the prosecution of God's work?

Ans.—Most certainly; because I believe that only through that organization of churches under the present conditions will the progress of God's kingdom be best conserved and best increased.

Dr. MEREDITH — Will you give us, if you please, a statement, as briefly and as simply as you can, of your view of the Doctrine of Atonement?

Ans.—I do not know that I have anything to add to what I have said in my paper in reference to that. I have discussed the Doctrine of Atonement more from God's side than from man's side. Until man appreciates the pardoning love of God, he cannot be pardoned; the appreciation of the pardoning love of God involves, in its very nature, repentance for sin that has passed and the realization and appreciation of the damnable-ness of sin, and therefore of the unworthiness of the creature in view of his having transgressed this eternal law of God. There must therefore be an appreciation of the pardoning mercy of God on the part of the sinner; there must be a provision for that pardon, which I believe to exist in the very nature of God.

Dr. MEREDITH — What do you mean by a struggle in the nature of God to pardon a sinner?

Ans.—I would put it in this way: We believe that God was in Jesus Christ; we believe that pardon was secured through Jesus Christ. I do not believe that there is much force in a Doctrine of Atonement having reference to Christ which does not acknowledge that the Deity was incarnate in Jesus Christ. The Atonement was the manifestation of the struggle, the aversion, the agony, that must always take place

when an infinitely pure Being comes in contact with sin—actual sin; for there is overwhelming antagonism between absolute righteousness and alienation from that righteousness. To use a very poor analogy, we cannot really, I believe, pardon a man unless it costs us something to pardon him. The mere excuse that costs us nothing is not a pardon, and if we can measure the infinite aversion of God to sin, and measure his infinite love of righteousness, I think we get some faint conception of the cost of pardon to the Godhead.

Dr. MEREDITH—You say that Jesus Christ came to secure pardon for men, and did secure pardon; how?

Ans.—He came to manifest the pardon that was already in the Divine Being by announcing it as his Evangel. This could not have been unattended with suffering, from the fact that he was promoting and announcing an Evangel among a people who were sinful.

Dr. MEREDITH—How did he come to manifest pardon that already existed in the Divine Mind? Pardon for whom?

Ans.—Pardon for those who, through sin, had alienated themselves from God.

Dr. MEREDITH—That is true of every child of the race?

Ans.—Yes, sir.

Dr. MEREDITH—Do you mean to say that Christ manifested the pardon of God to every child of this race?

Ans.—He manifested among the Hebrew people that which is true for all members of the race, manifested among the Hebrew people because they were prepared, measurably, though not perfectly, to comprehend and realize the announcement of that pardoning love. There are other people, I believe, who have appreciated dimly and vaguely the pardoning love of God; they have not a clearer manifestation of that love because their religious susceptibility has not enabled them to comprehend it as fully as in the case of the Hebrews.

Dr. BEECHER—I wish the brother would state the limitations of his service; is there a stated hour or place or church in which he preaches, or is that indefinite and general?

Ans.—I will answer in reference to that that I occupy an office the duties of which have, of necessity, not been as carefully defined as I hope they will be defined later. The present work that I am engaged in is largely in one of the mission churches, the Bethel Church, although I understand if I am installed as assistant pastor of this church that my obligation will extend to all the activities of the church; my connection with the Bethel Church so far has been as superintendent of the Sunday School, in preaching Sunday evenings, in taking charge of the Tuesday evening prayer-meeting, and exercising a general supervision over the interests of the Bethel Sunday School. Further than that my work has extended to the congregation, in making pastoral calls and in being present here at stated hours during the week to receive any applications for aid, physical or spiritual; in performing the regular pastoral duties where my services have been needed, and in being connected more or less actively with the various activities of the church, such as the gymnasium, girls' clubs, and boys' club.

Professor FISHER.—I would like to ask Mr. Bliss, in case he were applied to by a person who was weighed down by sins and alienation from God, and who had a feeling of remorse, if he were waited on with

the question, "What he should do to be saved?" what answer would you make?

Ans.—I would say this, first, if he were weighed down with a sense of his own unworthiness, "Try to get an adequate idea of the nature of God." I would not put it in that form to him, but I would try to give him an adequate idea of the nature of God—not adequate, but measurably adequate, which can be obtained from the records of his revelation to man. I would turn to the Bible as the place where the nature of God has been most fully revealed, and point him to my belief that Jesus Christ was the Deity Incarnate, and that the words of Christ represented to our minds the purpose of God in pardoning us, and that in him we were to find out that peace and that pardon which we were seeking, and which he was seeking, and which he could obtain.

Dr. MEREDITH—You would point him, then, to the way of Jesus Christ as his Saviour?

Ans.—Yes, sir.

Dr. MEREDITH—What do you regard as a qualification for membership in the Church?

Ans.—An expressed purpose humbly and sincerely to follow the good, the highest and best models in man, and a determination to seek for more and more light as to the range of duties and the range of service required.

Dr. MEREDITH—Would you not include a sense of some personal relation to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Ans.—I would include it in this sense, that I have never yet seen a person, and I cannot conceive of a person, who was filled with a desire to do good and to live the highest good, who was not drawn in some degree to the character of Jesus Christ. I would suspect, perhaps arbitrarily, that a failure to have some appreciation of the beauty and goodness of Christ's character was evidence that the searcher for truth was not sincere. But if you mean the personal relation in the sense that I would demand any confession as to the philosophical relation or the historical relation we should hold to Jesus Christ, I would make no such demand. In case he felt strong in his philosophy and in his interpretation of history, in case he felt strongly antagonistic sentiments to the Church to which I belonged, I would bid him God-speed, but would advise him to associate himself with a Church where there would be less friction between his historical and philosophical views than there probably would be in this case; believing, as I do, that those who realize that their new interpretation of philosophy and history will produce friction can, other things being equal, do better work elsewhere.

Dr. MEREDITH—I have in mind an uninstructed person who is looking for light with regard to the way of salvation; what do you understand by faith in that way, what we call "saving faith"?

Ans.—I would understand by that (to express it rather inadequately) a vital appreciation of the character of Jesus Christ, followed, as I believe that would necessarily be, by a determination to consecrate one's self to the higher life inculcated by Jesus Christ.

Mr. HALLIDAY—Supposing that poor sinner that Professor Fisher alluded to were to come to you, or you were sent to him in your pas-

toral visits, and the doctor were to tell you he had but fifteen minutes to live, and the first thing the man asked you was, "What shall I do to be saved"? What would you say?

Ans.— I would say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," if I felt that that expression would convey to him more adequately than any other the truth I would wish to explain to him if I had more time.

Dr. MEREDITH — Supposing he said, "I want to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; what is it? how am I to do it"?

Ans.— I would tell him that he must yield himself to all that spoke in his mind of the character of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dr. MEREDITH — But he does not know anything about the character of Christ; he has been a man that has not read the Bible?

Ans.— Of course, the case would depend entirely on how far his knowledge went, in other words, in what terms he had been thinking. It might be very difficult for me to determine in what terms a man might be thinking, and I might blunder; but I would endeavor to express to him the truth, as I felt it, most completely, in the terms in which he had been thinking, although, in the conveying of that idea, I might use terms that did not commend themselves to me for my own thinking.

Dr. ARMITAGE — I think it would be very pleasant if Mr. Bliss would give us a little more detail about his personal regeneration. His paper is very cursory on that subject, and I think that the questions that Professor Fisher put would practically be covered by a very short detail of the way he himself was led to trust the Lord Jesus Christ and the evidences of his regeneration. I would like first to have him give his views of the future state; what is to be the destiny of mankind hereafter; and also the influences of Christianity upon the eternal state?

Ans.— In reference to my personal experience I find it extremely difficult to formulate the stages in my belief or in my personal life. As I said, I was born and brought up in the atmosphere of a Christian home, which brought out, perhaps very clearly, my own sense of sin. I felt keenly my own sense of unworthiness and inability to lead the life that I wished to live, until I received help from above. As I saw more and more my inability to live as I felt I ought to live without a deliberate consecration to God, I felt a change, extending through weeks, months, years perhaps—a change of attitude in relation to God, and God became to me personal, and he became to me a Savior; I rested in him as one whose pardoning love would pardon the past, provided I came in the spirit of humility, the spirit of a little child, confessing my sins; and whose holy spirit would inspire me to greater activity and to a fuller consecration to him. Having reached that conclusion, I believed that, in order to make my force felt as much as possible, I ought to join a Church. I consulted with my father in reference to the matter. He had not spoken to me before directly upon the subject of my joining a Church; he of course was fully in sympathy with my idea, and a short time afterwards I joined a Church.

In relation to the second point, unless there is something more to be said upon the first, I will endeavor to express my belief briefly in reference to the future life. I believe in the immortality of the soul;

I believe that those who have yielded themselves to God, and who have endeavored to find truth and to realize truth in their lives, will pass in the future world to a state of ever-increasing knowledge and ever-increasing activity in realizing the developing of the God-given truth which they have received. I believe that those who have not so yielded themselves, who have alienated themselves from God in this life, will continue in the self-alienating process in Eternity. I say this with some diffidence, having appreciated in some degree the enormous difficulties of the problem, having realized that in many respects the doctrine of conditional immortality offered the best solution of this problem, and yet finding it impossible at the present time to agree to that doctrine of conditional immortality from the fact that I believe the doctrine of immortality itself would thereby be endangered.

In reference to the details of the future life, I do not know, except that I believe in an intermediate state, in a purgatory, if you will, for that intermediate state; a purgatory where there is growth, a stage in which we, going out of this world, imperfect creatures, with dwarfed ideas and blinded notions, shall grow; in which we are perfected, or rather in which we shall reach more and more perfect knowledge. How long that intermediate state lasts I do not know. I only know that I cannot believe in a transformation at death which is a magic transformation. I believe that those poor heathen — no, not those "poor heathen," but those good, inspired heathen — who yielded themselves as far as possible to the higher life, and who endeavored to realize and to live truth in their lives, do not pass at once into the communion of the highest heavens, because not able to appreciate such revelation as God has made, but that they will grow and grow, in an intermediate state, if you please, until they reach the heavens where growth does not cease, but where growth is continued under more favorable conditions.

Mr. HALLIDAY — Is that the intermediate state of which the Saviour said, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise"?

Ans. — There are, as I said, great difficulties connected with these problems; there are questions which are brought up by that verse which present some of the difficulties, and there are questions brought up by Christ's preaching in prison which cause other difficulties. How that verse is to be interpreted I do not know; but, without attempting or hoping to be able to explain all the facts of history or experience, I do feel that the hypothesis which I have spoken of, of an intermediate state, is more satisfactory than the idea that immediately at death every law of intellectual and spiritual growth with which we have become familiar in this life undergoes some magic change, and there is immediate entrance into a fixed state of blessedness or a fixed state of death or everlasting punishment, to use the usual expression. By that I do not mean that a person's destiny is not determined in this world; I believe that it is, as I said in my statement; but that those who have received light in this world, by their practical attitude have indicated that they belong to the kingdom of God, and will go on to greater and greater knowledge, and that that greater and greater knowledge will last through all eternity.

Rev. JOHN SCUDDER — I should like to ask Mr. Bliss if he recognizes that in our search for light and knowledge the Lord Jesus Christ

is final; in other words, whether there is anything which contradicts the revelation which he has given; whether there is anything which contradicts the teaching of Jesus Christ concerning God, or concerning the Deity, and concerning the salvation of the sinner; whether Jesus Christ is final authority on these matters?

Ans.—If I understand the question right, I can say that nothing can contradict the revelation that Christ made. I think a good deal can be supplemental to the revelation.

Mr. SCUDDER — By all means; but the point I ask seems to be the point that has been in the mind of many this afternoon, and that is whether there is authority supreme and distinctive in Christ's teachings; whether we as Christians, and you as a Christian minister, are to accept the authority of Christ and the teachings of Christ concerning the Deity, concerning man and his destiny, as that which is final?

Ans.—Final, yes; and final, no. I believe we know more about God to-day than the people did who heard for themselves.

Mr. SCUDDER (interposing) — My question is not what we know, but what Jesus Christ knew, and what he taught himself?

Ans.—I am a little at a loss to get the exact point; I should say that nothing can come in any time that would contradict the revelation that God made in Christ.

Mr. SCUDDER — Then you regard the testimony of Christ, the witness of Christ, as the supreme authority?

Ans.—Yes, sir.

A DELEGATE — Now in regard to your dealings with those who are not Christians; all that you desire to tell Christians concerning what they should be and what they should do, is it not summed up in the thought that they should trust Christ and should follow Christ?

Ans.—My experience has been that a very indefinite idea is conveyed by such an expression as "trusting Christ." I would prefer by far to take the second expression you used, "following Christ," and it would depend altogether upon the character of the person before me as to what line of argument I would follow with him. My purpose would be certainly, as a Christian minister and as one believing that God has given to us the fullest revelation of himself in Christ, to bring him ultimately to a personal consecration to Christ.

A DELEGATE — It seems to me that our questions are running along toward this one point without going straight to the point, as to whether Jesus Christ is the one to whom the Christian minister and the Christian is looking, and it seems to me the only statement that we want to make clear, and which I understand you now to have made clearer than before, is that in the revelation of God Jesus Christ is not the only revelation, but that he is the supreme revelation.

Dr. REED — I should like simply to ask, as I did not get the idea of what Mr. Bliss said in answer to the question, "What shall I do to be saved?" whether he regards regeneration as coming through a natural or a supernatural process?

Ans.—I certainly regard regeneration as the work of God, and in that sense supernatural. When regeneration takes place, how it takes place I do not know; but I certainly believe in regeneration.

Dr. REED — I understand that, but I could not make out from your answer that you gave whether it was a natural process of the

mind or through the direct agency of the divine element on the human soul?

Ans.—The direct agency of the Divine becoming manifest in a changed attitude toward God and toward truth.

A DELEGATE—I want simply to ask the question whether there is any power which can be brought to bear upon the change of life in a man that is at all commensurate with the power in motive of God's love in Christ?

Ans.—That also depends, sir, upon circumstances. There are persons who, I am certain, will not bring into question the existence of God or the revelation of God in Christ; certainly to those who admit that, I cannot conceive of any greater means of stimulating their interest in the religious life, in a Godlike life, than by trying to exhibit to them the nature of God and show them that that nature is most fully exhibited to us in Christ.

A DELEGATE—Would you consider that a man had had the power of motive exhausted upon him to change his life except as the power of Christ had been brought to bear upon him?

Ans.—Unless ultimately I brought that power to bear upon him, certainly not.

Dr. WRIGHT—Do I understand Brother Bliss to say that he would receive as a proper candidate for a member of the church any one who did not accept Jesus Christ as the absolute word and authority of him, of the church, the world, and everybody else?

Ans.—I would answer that by saying it depended very much on the person who came; that expression, "absolute word and authority in his life and in the church," can be most variously interpreted.

Dr. WRIGHT—I am not asking about the words, not whether you would require a candidate to accept those words, but the thing that they represent; I do not care what you get out of the language?

Ans.—No, sir; if such a candidate presented himself, and I were convinced that he was making the same effort sincerely and humbly in his life which is best expressed for me in determining and stating my attitude toward Christ, I would not keep him out of the church unless I felt, as I said before, that his activity could be best exerted in some other church.

Dr. WRIGHT—I am not sure that I understand the brother; then you would receive a Buddhist into a Christian Church if you thought he was doing his best?

Ans.—If the Buddhist should come to America, to Brooklyn, and should wish to ally himself with the forces of the good, the moral forces, in order that this city might be made better, if that man should come to me and should say he wished the fellowship of those who were interested in the higher life, I would certainly advise him not to join this church, because his intellectual convictions and philosophical convictions would create a large amount of friction among those with whom he was associated. I would advise him to connect himself with societies, which I regret to say necessarily exist, because there he would find greater harmony and greater freedom in his efforts to strengthen the moral life of this community. But if he were rejected everywhere else I could meet him on the ground of our common interest in rousing the moral forces. This is a case which I consider altogether hypo-

thetical; supposing that such a man should come to me, I would advise him, as I said before, not to join my church, but to go where he could work in greater harmony with other organizations.

A DELEGATE—I have gathered from a variety of questions and answers the impression, which I would like to have either confirmed or corrected, that some of your answers which I have not found fault with in my own mind, although they have been somewhat different from the traditional kind of answers, have been from some personal experience of your own in dealing with some rather peculiar cases, and I would like to ask whether, in the answers that you have given, you have had actual experience of that kind in mind, or whether you have had purely hypothetical cases?

Ans.—This would involve, perhaps, a little personal experience; is that what you ask for?

A DELEGATE—Precisely; that is what I ask for.

Ans.—I have (having been born in a foreign country) come in contact with missionary work and missionary methods, with sincere and earnest men with whom I differed historically and philosophically, and yet who are interested in the higher life; I have seen something of the work in our great cities; in London I have come in contact with men who are extremely interested in the development of the higher life, although their methods of work are novel. Thus I have been forced to face this question of attitude and fellowship, and perhaps I have reached conclusions which are hypothetical in this sense, that these cases probably will not come before me; and yet I have met cases which have forced me to take the same attitude toward them. Also, my studies have led me, the last two years especially, to the study of Comparative Religions, and, although believing, as I have said, that the supreme revelation is in Jesus Christ, I do not believe it is the exclusive revelation. I believe that the proper definition of Congregationalism, Protestantism, Roman and Greek Catholicism, is an effort to build up the moral life—the proper definition in its essence. Historically it is different; there is an essential and a historical Christianity; and my attitude in dealing with men will be guided entirely by their views of historical Christianity. I shall urge them, as far as I can, to accept the view which I hold in reference to the historic Christ, because I do believe in the historic Christ, the Eternal Word, the Second Person in the Trinity, as we call it, who was incarnate, and therefore the one in whom we have the most complete revelation given to mankind.

DR. MEARS—Are you aware that there is the slightest difference in the views which you have presented here in their substance and the view which is held in extremely conservative circles to-day, namely, that to all men beyond the Christian life who have lived according to the light they possess the essential Christ had been manifested?

Ans.—Not the slightest, sir.

DR. MEREDITH—I would like to go to a point that I think is in the mind of more than one member of the Council, and it is in my own mind. This thing of being a Christian is a positive and a definite thing, and I would like to ask, isn't it true that to be a Christian in this country, or in any other country, a man must devote himself to God revealed in Jesus Christ as the supreme object of his life?

Ans.—I would there have to make a distinction: essentially or historically?

Dr. MEREDITH—I do not care for the history; I mean essentially; a Christian down here in the Bethel Mission?

Ans.—I must refuse to drop the distinction between historical and essential Christianity, because in one sense I believe that a man is essentially a Christian who has devoted himself to the search for truth, or rather not simply a search for truth, but a realization of the truth in his life—in all ages and in all times; that man I believe to be essentially a Christian. The historical Christian believes that in his search for truth he has found in Jesus Christ that object and aim which he must endeavor to realize in his life before he can be a Christian.

Dr. MEREDITH—I know, but return to my question; the Bible contains the truth of God. There is one thing higher than truth in the Bible; there is one thing to which truth is only the means of and a thing with reference to; that is love, which is the grandest thing in the Bible. Truth is the way to love. Now, fix our minds on love, and I ask you again, can a man under any sun, under any sky, be a Christian who does not devote himself to God in Jesus Christ as the supreme object of life?

Ans.—Certainly, sir.

Dr. MEREDITH—He can be?

Ans.—Yes, sir.

Dr. MEREDITH—Can a man be a Christian who does not take the character of Jesus Christ as the model of his character?

Ans.—Essentially a Christian; yes, sir.

Mr. BENEDICT—I do not understand you to mean by that that he should take a different model for his life?

Ans.—As I said before, I cannot conceive of a man—Dr. Meredith has mentioned a hypothetical case, and I have endeavored to answer his hypothetical case—I cannot conceive of a man who is interested in the higher life directly repudiating a man who is avowedly to all the model of the higher life.

Dr. MEARS—Is a man saved by his knowledge of Christ or by Christ's knowledge of him?

Ans.—The man is saved by God's sovereign grace.

This closed the examination.

A motion, duly seconded, was thereupon made that the Council be now by itself, which motion prevailed.

Just before the re-opening of the doors Mr. Bliss was summoned and advised of the unanimous vote to proceed to his ordination and installation. He made a brief response, and the Council adjourned at five o'clock and ten minutes.



SUPPER SPEECHES.

UPON the adjournment supper was served in the Lecture Room to the delegates, the officers of the Church and their spouses, and invited guests. Rev. Joseph H. Twichell, of Hartford, presided. Mrs. Beecher sat on his right, and Mrs. Abbott on his left. After supper Mr. Twichell said, in substance :

I received from Dr. Abbott, several days since, a note saying that after we had broken bread together on this occasion, as we have done and are doing, there would be a few five-minute speeches before the time fixed for the evening services to begin, and that he desired me to take the chair and moderate them before the exercises of the evening. I took the note to my wife and read it to her, and said, "Well, must I do it?" That admirable woman, who has a profound acquaintance with me, without hesitation answered, "Yes, of course, you must; but be short." Said I, "Why do you think he wants me to do it?" She said, "To get rid of you, I suppose." That method is a very good one to try, but it does n't always work, for one of my brother pastors in the Baptist ministry in Hartford once told me at a ministers' meeting how much he suffered from an old brother who attended his prayer-meetings, with his everlasting remarks. When he undertook on one occasion to head him off by saying, "Brother So-and-so, will you please lead us in prayer?" the brother arose and said, sadly: "I was intending to make a few remarks. I don't know but I can throw them into the form of a prayer"—and proceeded to do so. The first gentleman I am instructed to call upon I see is a man who was a college contemporary of mine; and before I call him up I desire to say a word to him, to make a fair and generous offer; and that is, if he won't tell on me I won't tell on him!"

The Rev. Samuel Scoville spoke as follows :

I accept your offer, Mr. Chairman, and will be very careful not to tell what I never knew. That is, things to your disparagement.

I too received a communication from Dr. Abbott, but when I read the list of names of those to be present and take part, I said to myself, "Now this is very kind of Brother Abbott to remember me, but with such speakers I do not think that guns of my caliber will be wanted, or heard if they should go off." I honestly thought the programme could not be carried out; so I didn't show the invitation to my wife, as Brother Twichell did. I wish I had now; for, lo, here I am the first called upon to speak.

There is another thing that has kept me from any definite preparation. I was brought up with the idea that children should be seen and not heard; so I have been sitting upstairs in the front row of seats to-day and keeping as quiet as possible. The fact is, I have been mothered and fathered so kindly here that I can never cease to look upon myself as in a certain sense the child of this church, with an intense love but with no responsibility for it whatsoever, and of course in duty bound to make room for others who are more or less strangers or guests. Hence, it has never come to my thought until to-day that it was for me to speak a word of encouragement or bring a word of counsel here, for I was but one of the boys, and it is not for us to help in this way at present; by and by, when we get the wisdom and experience of age, we shall be able to come and say, "Brethren, this is what the Lord calls upon all of us to do!" Perhaps the time will come when we shall do this, but I suspect that I shall always feel like a boy in this church.

This is the lecture-room, the dear old lecture-room, of Plymouth Church, in some respects the most central of all its many centers. What crowds of pleasant and blessed associations cluster around this place, in which all of us have shared! How

together we have sung and prayed and laughed and been made tearful, and been comforted and made hopeful by the services in this room !

There is one experience which you never had, but which I have had, and which is to-night perhaps the most vivid of any remembrance of this place. It was of coming in here and sitting with one member of his family in front of my prospective father-in-law, expecting any moment that he would call upon me to lead in prayer ; and he did it, and I remember it very well.

And up there on that desk is where I made about my first essay in the preaching line. It was when the pastor was unexpectedly called away and he made me take his place, and I remember how kindly you sat and listened in spite of your disappointment. My thought is to-night, and continually, that he always wanted to make something of me, and that you always kindly seconded his wishes and efforts, and my heart is full of gratitude to him and to you all.

It seems very appropriate that a part of the service of this occasion should be this feasting together by the members of this Church and these friends of the Council. More natural, and perhaps more pleasing to some, than have been the more formal exercises upstairs.

We read of an occasion similar to this in the early history of the Church, when two brethren were set apart, as has been done or will be done to-day, for a special work. We read that the brethren fasted and prayed, and laid their hands upon them, and sent them away. We have varied somewhat from that practice, for we feast instead of fast, and do not send them away, but hold on to them and keep them with us. A difference of manifestation, certainly, but we believe of the same spirit. To each age it is given to emphasize some one feature of its great inheritance. To our time, and markedly to this church, it has been given to illustrate the beauty of the joyful fellowship of the saints. This we have been attempting to do during the past hour in a method that seems to us to be eminently in harmony with the teachings and methods of our master and with the traditions of this church. And so far as my observation extends around these tables, it seems to have been looked upon with favor by every one of the brethren present.

We look upon this church as in many respects an illustration of the higher elements of our common Christianity, of its hope and faith, and most of all of its element of love ; and we want to see and expect to see it move forward in the beautiful course it has been pursuing now so many years. It must necessarily differ greatly, in some respects, in the future from what it has been in the past. The rivers that have their origin in the springs among the mountains have a certain freshness and beauty in their early course that they never have again ; but if in their progress they move with less song it need not be with less power or beneficence ; but, retaining the waters they have already received and receiving new supplies, their progress shall be with ever-increasing volume. We hope that it will be so with this church. Springing from the living fountains of God's grace, receiving into its bosom the influences of a great life and of a nature of unsurpassed richness, loyally retaining these elements and these inspirations and continually receiving new ones from the ever-present source of its being, and from the teachings, lives, and characters of those intrusted with its care, we shall expect to see it move forward in a course of continued and increasing prosperity. This prosperity shall be the seal of God's approval of the work, brethren, that we do to-day ; this prosperity in Christian living shall be the justification of the choice which this church has made of pastors and the indorsement of their creed. True prosperity in building up Christian character and making the Christian life powerful in the common affairs of men will be the most comely and fitting monument that can be reared in Brooklyn unto him who is remembered by us to-day with joy and with tears ; and, higher than all, it is the one fitting trophy to lay at the feet of him whom not having seen we all love.

With these words that poorly express what I feel, with loyalty to the old church that has received so many members since I was more intimate here that it has almost become a new church, grateful for the privilege of being present with you to-day, with words of good cheer and prayers for God's blessing upon the pastors who have been received and will be placed to-day officially at the head of this body, I give place to others. I am glad to be here. I shall be glad, when the services are completed and we are scattered, to feel that the great work that has been begun and that has been so beautiful in the life of this community and in the life of the nation and the world is to move forward unto its culmination.

The Rev. Dr. George A. Gordon, of the Old South Church, Boston, was then introduced, and spoke as follows :

It has been said that an after-dinner speech must consist of an anecdote, a platitude, and a quotation. I have been trying to find a suitable anecdote, and have failed. I have had no time left to find a suitable quotation, and I have only the platitude, which does not require any thought to give you. This is a very delightful platitude, for we never tire of the old phrases that are filled with the ever-fresh stream of affection flowing from our hearts. When I sign myself the son of a solitary mother across the sea, as I do once a month, I never feel that the platitude is insignificant or doesn't convey a very warm and lively sense of a heart three thousand miles away; and I am very glad to be allowed, as a representative of an individual church, to come here and express the fellowship of that church for Plymouth Church, and my own personal esteem and friendship and admiration for its pastor-elect.

It is very interesting to think of the relation of men and institutions to the age in which they live. We want to know whether the flower grows in a garden or in a desert; whether the beautiful tree is set among other beautiful trees or in some lonely plain; whether the star shines in a mighty constellation of stars or is set in a dark and troubled sky. It has been the merit of a great many men in history that they have stood forth in opposition to the characteristic and dominant tendencies of their times. We recognize the merit of Wickliffe, of Huss, of Savonarola. Their peculiar merit lies in their strenuous and heroic opposition to all that was characteristic and dominant in the age in which they lived.

Then, again, we recognize the merit of other men and of other institutions in that they stand forth as a mighty exposition of all that is characteristic in their time. So I have been thinking of Plymouth Church in its relation to the last half of the century in which it has its existence. The universal thought of our day has been the thought of the people, of universal education, of democracy in education and democracy in knowledge. Fifty years ago, or even before Grote and Jowett translated Plato, he was an inaccessible book to the masses of men. Within twenty years the other great Greek philosopher has been put at the disposal of the common people, and the great thinkers and classic writers of Greece and Rome have been rendered into the idiom of the people. It has been democracy in education and in knowledge. When I was a boy, in Great Britain, men had to pay a rental of fifty pounds a year to have a vote in the determination of Members of Parliament. Now any man who pays a rental of less than twenty-five dollars has a vote. So it has been democracy in government. The whole trend of the age has been in the interest of the people, so that Abraham Lincoln's sentence that "Government of the people, by the people, for the people," may be taken as a motto of all the characteristics of our time. The great glory of Plymouth Church in the past is this: that it has been in sympathy with the deep-flowing tendencies of the times. It has been in sympathy with all that is most characteristic and truthful and beautiful in the age in which it lived. The merit of the illustrious man toward whom the thought of every person has been turned to-day was not in his inimitable wit, not in his graceful and matchless forms of speech, not in the power almost unparalleled of his oratory, but in the fact that he brought to bear upon the lives of so many of his fellow-men the fundamental conceptions of the Gospel of Christ. He was an Abraham Lincoln in religion, and he recognized that Christianity is a religious democracy, and his whole life was given to render the Gospel of Christ into the idiom of the people; and so his life has gone out through all the earth, and his words to the end of the world. I want to say of his successor that he has been treading in the same pathway; as journalist, commentator, lecturer, and preacher he has been doing the utmost to render the mighty conceptions of Christianity into the mother tongue of men. And in this blessed work to which he is coming he is putting himself in sympathy with all that is most beneficent and beautiful and divine in the generation in which it has been given him to live his life. Let me close this very inadequate expression of my interest in this occasion, in Plymouth Church, in its illustrious dead, and in the living preacher of to-day, with a quotation from one of Mr. Beecher's sermons: "The past belongs to gratitude and regret"—gratitude for so great a life, regret that it could not have been prolonged—"the present belongs to contentment and work, and the future to hope and trust."

Rev. Dr. D. O. Mears, of Worcester, said:

It was said that several years after the death of the great preacher Massillon a traveler requested to be shown the site in Clermont where he had lived a large part of the year. He was shown into the garden, and told that this was the gar-

den that he cultivated. He was shown the paths around the garden, and told that these were the paths around which he walked. He was shown the arbor, and told that this was the arbor under which he rested; and, going into the house, he was pointed out the study where he had forged his thoughts for his great congregation. But when he came to the room where the great preacher died his guide broke down with the simple words, "And here is where we lost him."

In this hour, in Plymouth Chapel, where a greater than Massillon spoke, every moment is that of inspiration. Deeply as we loved him, long as we honor him, there is not one of us but must rise and stand in gladness that we have known the name and, better yet, have held in love the name of Henry Ward Beecher—the John Brown of the pulpit, without John Brown's rashness; the Garrison of reform, without acerbity; the Whittier of poetry, though every sermon was a poem. Henry Ward Beecher has done the work which Mark Twain said some years ago would result in this, that at the end of this century on all the great reforms it would be found to be written on the corner of the reform "H. W. B." I remember that in the time of the war it was said that President Lincoln looked for the utterances of but two men, Wendell Phillips of Boston and Henry Ward Beecher of Brooklyn, and through the utterance of those two men the great emancipator as President waited till he felt the thrill, and, reading through them that the time had come, he signed the Emancipation Proclamation for liberty. I remember in my settlement in Cambridge one sermon that Mr. Beecher preached against the old Calvinistic theory of foreordination and predestination. In two or three weeks time Dr. Adams, of the Union Church in Boston, old-school man though he was, came out in the same line and declared the same doctrine, and the same principle was taken up by our religious denominational paper, because he had fallen into the heresy of the man of Plymouth Church. I say that in these great reforms those letters "H. W. B." bore an important part, and yet, in looking over the *Britannica* once, simply out of curiosity to find out how much space they had to give to Henry Ward Beecher, I found that the man who had handled the growling lion of England without fear or dismay and held England on the side of America in her struggle for freedom—the *Britannica* has not room for even the initials, much less the name of Henry Ward Beecher. But every man like this in his dominant power will have his disciples and his followers, and we are not to forget the men that stood side by side in this church, and the women who spoke for freedom and for the slave; most of the church were equal to their leader. They were not far behind him in the knowledge of the people, and would buy and send into liberty and freedom those who had been bound in chains. There is something heroic in the stand of this church with him whose name, if it were ever effaced from Plymouth, would mean that Plymouth Church had fallen from its position and was no more worthy the name. I have just this thought in closing. The church is taking up the work that Mr. Beecher began. I claim that the men of Plymouth Church, in all their heroism and loyalty, could not keep up with him in his marvelous march, but it is left to them on whom his mantle has fallen to stand with him who was his scholar but now is the pastor of this church, and to stand and proclaim the principles that he proclaimed. I do not say that the pastor of this church will take his doctrines. I do not say that this church is to be bound by the rules and principles which he inculcated; but if this church in its search after freedom, in its releasement from bondage, ecclesiastical and political, if this church shall stand with the reverend, devout spirit of Henry Ward Beecher, we may trust the church to continue what their master and leader so well began.

I cannot take a moment of time of the few minutes for such a theme, five minutes in such a place—the lecture-room and the lecture-room talks, the annex of the building that in the past so inspired its pastor was so high that it needed no bell, his voice was so like music—I say, to stand here, and in five minutes, we simply receive the fact that all we can lay beside his name is a poor paper flower that is destitute of the fragrance and the beauty of the flower which it designs to pattern and imitate.

The Chairman then said :

I have an estimable friend named Tom, an aged Irishman, with whom I have often talked; and he is a man well worth talking with, I can assure you. We lately had a conversation upon the subject of death, and my friend was speaking of his probable departure not long hence out of this life, and he concluded what he said about it thus: Said he, "Mr. Twichell, I am in no hurry to go. I am not afraid to go,

but I am in no hurry to go. I am content to stay, because, Mr. Twichell, when you are here you know where you are."

Now, the gentleman whom I am going to call up next I desire to ask if he knows where he is; for he is the Rev. E. Winchester Donald, pastor of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in New-York City.

Dr. Donald responded as follows :

There was a clergyman who preached on the subject of Adam in the Garden, and he divided his sermon into three heads. First, man is generally somewhere. Secondly, he is somewhere sometimes where he ought not to be. And, in the third place, if he doesn't look out he will find himself where he doesn't want to be.

As this is a quotation from the Chairman's sermon, I address it as a satisfactory answer to his question. But I did not come here to answer the Chairman's question. I came for another purpose. There are some of us in the Episcopal Church whose utterances in regard to the relation of the ministry of the several churches has been found such that we have often been taunted with their being mere words—that there was not the reality of action in them. I was, therefore, exceedingly glad when I got an invitation from Plymouth Church to honorary membership into the Council, which was not only to install but was to ordain. For I said to myself there will be one man at least whose utterances in his own pulpit and on his own platform and in the press can be put to the test of reality; and I come here, therefore, not as the representative of a church, but as an Episcopal minister, to wish Godspeed to Dr. Abbott and to Mr. Bliss as they begin the work of the Christian ministry in Plymouth Church. I wish it distinctly understood that my brother and myself, who are here to-day, are not here in defiance of the ecclesiastical authorities of the Diocese of Massachusetts or the Diocese of New-York. We came openly to the Council. We are here openly, and we are ready to meet any competent authority which is pleased to inquire into our right to be here and extend as Christian ministers our greetings to other Christian ministers. I say it reflectingly, and not extemporaneously, that if there is criticism upon our action as Episcopalian ministers you are sure to find it in that curse of the church, the denominational newspaper. The tendency of the nineteenth century is not confined to the Episcopal Church. It belongs to all the churches who have, in place of the Pope and his infallibility, substituted the denominational newspaper and its infallibility. I have on more than one occasion been present when prisoners gathered for their religious service on Sunday afternoon. They were so placed beneath hoods that they could see only straight in front of them, and see only one man; and I often wonder whether the denominational newspaper is not in precisely the same condition as the prisoner when he comes to these services in the prison. He can see straight ahead of him, but he certainly cannot see around about him. I want to say in the most explicit terms, in words that by no means can be twisted into something that they do not mean, that I stand as an Episcopal minister, a High Churchman, if you please to call me so, and I extend to Dr. Abbott and to Mr. Bliss my greetings as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, in every respect spiritually competent to preach the word of God and to administer the two sacraments which alone belong to the Church.

When I think of the great services which the Congregational churches have rendered to the Episcopal Church, it seems to me we have been a little tardy in acknowledging our debt. You have educated almost a third of our ministers, and if all our bishops would own where they got whatever knowledge they have, fully one-third would say that they got it from sources that are non-Episcopal. When one thinks of Harvard College, of Yale College, Amherst, Williams, and Dartmouth, which have been so potent forces in molding and shaping not only the individual but the religious life of America, and remembers that they were founded and that they have been maintained by Congregational churches and by Congregational faith and spirit, and then remembers how much they have contributed to the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church, it seems to me we cannot be too strong in our expressions of gratitude to what the Congregational Church has done toward the Protestant Episcopal Church.

I want to say another word. To my thinking there has been begun in Plymouth Church to-day an experiment in Congregationalism. I refer now to the ordination of Mr. Bliss, not as the minister of a Bethel, not as the man who is to do the stray marrying and the difficult baptizing and the objectionable burying, but the man who is to be, in a sense, the co-ordinate pastor of your church. In the Protestant

Episcopal Church, twenty-five years ago, the assistant minister was generally chosen on the principle that he might make a sharp contrast to the rector; and if the rector was declining in years, his voice getting a little weak, and his stature was shrinking somewhat, the young man was chosen on the lowness of his voice and the insignificance of his physique. That is all changed; and one of the reasons that the Protestant Episcopal Church is so strong—and it is strong—is because there has been a recognition of this fact, that there is no such person, ecclesiastically, as the rector. There is only a bishop and a priest and a deacon. Ecclesiastically the rector is simply the creation of the ecclesiastical civil law of the land. As a consequence the assistant minister of our parishes is a man who is working co-ordinately with the rector, and the difference between the two is generally known only on that unpleasant day when we meet our church wardens and our vestry!

In your churches, as I understand it, there is no such office as assistant minister, and Mr. Bliss has come here to create and not to succeed to the functions, and we, who wish you well, shall watch with very greatest interest whether it is possible for you to graft upon your system an assistant ministership, by which the pastor of this church shall have some one who is working with him along the same lines, and is regarded, not as second pastor, but as his peer as a Christian minister.

If I were to give the right hand of fellowship or the charge to the people—which I am not—I should charge the people to meet with sympathy and with intelligence this attempt on the part of Plymouth Church, that there shall be no whispers, much less cries, throughout this parish that “the assistant minister” was sent, as though some third-rate thing was sent, but let it rather be said that the “other minister” of the church preached to-day, the “other minister” of the church made the visit, and let curiosity find out which is the one and which is the other.

The next speaker was Rev. Dr. George E. Reed, President of Dickinson College. He spoke in part as follows:

I desire to speak heartily for the body with which I am connected when I say that of all men of the pulpit in this country in the last thirty-five or forty years, I believe there was no man whose influence was more profoundly felt than that of the late pastor of Plymouth Church, and no body of Christian people in which he had a larger following of friends. And I am glad to say also, in behalf of his distinguished successor, that I know that Dr. Abbott is held in very high esteem by the great majority at least of the ministers of the church with which I am connected. I am confident that it is a satisfaction to many that he is to be installed as pastor of this historic church.

I was resident in the city of Brooklyn at the time of Mr. Beecher's lamented departure. The church I served mingled its tears throughout the length and breadth of its membership with the people of Plymouth Church for the great sorrow which you have sustained and which the whole city shared with them. We knew that the question was often asked throughout the length and breadth of the city as to the future of Plymouth Church; whether it would continue to live; whether it would continue to be a forceful power in the city of Brooklyn, as it had been in the preceding years of its illustrious history. There were many who thought that the great congregation would disintegrate, that the mighty church membership would melt away, and so far as the church itself might be concerned Mr. Beecher's name might have been writ in water. Not that his influence as a scholar and as a thinker could perish, for that would be sure to live throughout the ages to come. So it has been a matter of great gratification, I am sure, to all bodies of Christian people, that this great and historic Church has continued its life, its great and useful life, in this city; that to-day it is big and strong and powerful, and with mighty promise for large usefulness in the future. And I extend, speaking unofficially, but still heartily, for the great membership of the church with which I am associated, to Dr. Abbott the best wishes of that body, and the fervent prayers also for his success as the pastor of this church, and unite heartily in the prayer that Plymouth Church may continue to be in this section of the city, and throughout the whole city, and throughout the whole land, so far as its influence is concerned, the potent power, the mighty influence which it has been in the days of its lamented and its illustrious leader. Success to Plymouth Church! Success to the dear brother in Christ who is to-night to be installed as its pastor! May the blessing of God rest upon him and upon his people, and the city in which this church is located!

The last speaker at the supper was Rev. Dr. Charles E. Robinson, of Scranton, Pa. He spoke in part as follows :

I am very glad to be here this evening, and to express in the very few moments which are given to me my felicitations and congratulations to this church upon its present and the great promise of its future.

One of the most unkind things that was ever said of Mr. Beecher was said by those who did not know the church in its vast work, and that is, that the church would not live after he died ; that it would surely break up. Those who knew him best knew that he never built this church or its ministry upon himself. If he had done so, the sooner the church would have broken up and broken down the better. But it does not look to-night as if this church was breaking down. If this is breaking down, then I advise a great many of the churches I know of to break down just in the same way. I congratulate you most heartily, dear friends of Plymouth Church, for many of you are old and dear friends to me, upon the great promise which your outlook presents, and I bring to you the salutations of many friends from the church to which I belong, the Presbyterian Church, which is always in hearty sympathy with Congregational churches, with the hope and prayer that God's blessing will rest upon your future.



EVENING SESSION.

THE evening session was held in the Church. Dr. Meredith presided. The Scriptures (Eph. iv.) were read by Rev. Dr. Roberts, and the minutes of the previous sessions were read by the Scribe.

The general subject assigned to the speakers was "The Religious Needs of the Age and the Duties Devolving on the Church of To-day." Rev. Dr. Bradford spoke as follows:

ADDRESS OF THE REV. DR. A. H. BRADFORD.

IN a building whose walls have hardly yet ceased to resound with the most marvelous eloquence ever heard in an American pulpit we are met to install and ordain ministers. But yesterday that matchless voice, magnetic manner, and more than electric spirit moved on the crowds which filled this church, and strong men bowed as fields of grain before the west wind. The tones that inspired like an organ and thrilled like the music of the Marseillaise are still. Among the great Americans of the first century of the Republic the name of the late pastor of this church will stand in the highest rank. Daniel Webster will be remembered as the expounder of the Constitution; Abraham Lincoln bound the Union as he unbound the slave; Grant was the American William the Silent; but none among them did a nobler work for humanity and the nation than he who has helped so many to realize that "God, Christ, the Spirit; are synonymous with love, fellowship, freedom." But individuals are not long essential to a cause. Men die, principles live. Even our Master said: "It is expedient for you that I go away." None is so great but that each in turn must give place to those for whom new times are calling. Henry Ward Beecher's work was done. It was a glorious ministry, but it was finished. And now, as we look back and remember how quickly the vacant place is taken, how swiftly Elisha has followed Elijah, do we not realize that, in the old sense, there are no more leaders in the Church or world? Who can be said to have been far in advance of his fellows during the past century? Lincoln and Grant had great opportunities; Robertson and Newman had peculiar gifts of person and manner; Bright and Gambetta were phenomenal orators; Darwin was a unique investigator; Lotze a profound speculative thinker; Gladstone is a marvelous statesman. But who, in statesmanship, philosophy, science, theology, or the pulpit, for a hundred years, has risen above the masses as the giants of the elder ages? From decade to decade a leader has been anticipated, but has not appeared, and we are beginning to understand that such exceptional men are no longer required. The great of earlier times are like mountains—a few peaks,

and below them abysses of ignorance, sin, and despair. But the era in which individuals rise to Alpine altitudes has passed. The valleys are being uplifted. The landscape is like an upland on which the sunlight rests, and where winds clear and cool are perpetually blowing. Humanity means more; individuals attract less attention. We hear less of heroes, because more are heroic. When an army is thrilled by one spirit and inspired by one motive, he who marches in the van is rather the representative of the rest than their commander. The new day shines on a host all looking forward and keeping step to the music of progress.

And this is a tribute to the worth of the work of those who have gone. "The heretics of yesterday," Luther, Calvin, Edwards, Channing, opened doors through which a multitude have passed. Our work is not so much to open doors as to realize privileges. Because I believe that no man of the century will live in history as the pre-eminent prophet, I do not belittle either the men or the time, but rather honor them. It requires a lofty spirit to be the leader of this general tion. Bushnell, Robertson, Beecher, still live and inspire, because they voiced the thought and experience of the ranks of the Christian host rather than because they were far in advance of hundreds of others. It is the glory of this new day that, while in power and freedom the individual is more and more, in exaltation above his brethren he is less and less. No American of the century was more prominent than he who for forty years was pastor of this church; but the very excellence of his work makes it impossible for him to occupy the place in history he would have occupied had he lived four centuries earlier. He had the mien and spirit, the courage and self-sacrifice, of a Luther, but no such work as Luther's awaited him. He was a hero in a stormy time, but one hero among ten thousand equally brave and consecrated, if not equally gifted. He broke shackles right and left, but he was, after all, one free, brave knight of God among ten thousand who, according to their ability and opportunity, were doing the same work. Others, realizing the freedom of the spirit, living in the light of the love of God and the fellowship of humanity, walked by his side, keeping step with him who was their leader not so much because he was ahead of them as because best fitted to voice the truth which they saw and the emotions with which they thrilled.

As I study his life and ministry I am impressed with the fact that he had entered into and realized intensely the spirit, which realization is the supreme religious need of our time. "There should be more brotherhood," cries the Socialist. "There should be a return to the old, safe doctrines of grace," cries one school of theologians. "There should be a more distinctly ethical Christianity," say philosophic thinkers. Yes, there should be a thousand things, no doubt, but all needs are condensed in one — the realization of the life of the spirit. Wherever man may have come from, he is bound for the kingdom of heaven; whatever may be true of his body, his living, thinking, aspiring nature is a breath from the land of spirits; whatever may be done with the body when it dies, death breaks limitation and gives freedom. Said Pastor Monod to the divines of Scotland: "We find you disputing about election and probation, but we in Paris are facing the tremendously more important fact that at the bottom men are doubting

whether there is a God." Not alone in Paris, but around the world, is felt the subtle influence of that infidelity. The real problem of the pulpit is to make men realize God and their own spiritual nature. Amiel begins his journal with this supreme sentence: "There is but one thing needful — to possess God." A thousand forces are weakening faith. The Nihilist says: "It is very well for those who sit in ceiled houses to believe in God, but how can I believe in him?" Wealth and luxury are making the rich heedless and effeminate. Science pushes even to the precincts of Arcturus and Alcyone, and says: "I find nothing but matter and space." The need of to-day is men in all our pulpits who know themselves as spirits, and God as the Father of spirits; men who dare to preach that the only permanent cure for social and moral disorder in this or any time is that all shall realize that they are children of God, and that their only true life with one another is the life of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

That realization was the keynote of the ministry of Henry Ward Beecher; and yet he had a mission which made it impossible for him to emphasize these truths as they should be emphasized now. He had to swing Thor's hammer in the fight against slavery; he had to defend his country on foreign battle-fields when only his masterful tact, unsurpassed wisdom, and unequalled eloquence could avail; he had to clear away obstructions which ignorance had built around the temple of God. But he illustrated the truth which is needed to-day — the realization of the life of the spirit. He believed in a God of love so intensely that he made others believe in Him; believed in all men as brethren so absolutely that others began to act as if they were brothers. He was always willing to learn. Before him the universe, like the bush in the wilderness, flamed with God, and because he trusted to God he pointed to "the one far-off, divine event to which the whole creation moves" — the redemption of all things through Jesus Christ. But at last the work required other hands. Then, "without sound of wings or footfall, he departed on his last journey." New conditions demand new men, while all times ask for teachers of religion who can point to a God whom they know they know by personal experience, who realize the life of the spirit, whose eyes are always toward the light, and whose faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and love is inseparable from their faith in God. "Our century demands a new theology; that is to say, a more profound explanation of the nature of Christ and of the light which it flashes upon heaven and upon humanity."

Of that new theology which has no place for negations, but only for the supreme realities, that theology which shows that the hand of God is on the whole life of man, physical as well as spiritual, a theology which discloses in one and the same transcendent personality God descending to man and humanity rising to God, the pastor of this church was the forerunner. Others will speak of the new order in Plymouth Church; it has been allotted to me to speak of the old. What more can I say that is not known already? The world will not soon forget him who stood here in the old days, but it will not so well remember those who worked with him and made possible his success. No one surpasses me in admiration of the splendid gifts and still more splendid ministry of Henry Ward Beecher, but I dare even in this presence to say that the debt of the world is as great to Plymouth Church as to its

pastor. It is well to ask, What would Plymouth Church have been without Henry Ward Beecher? It is equally pertinent to ask, Would Henry Ward Beecher have achieved as much without Plymouth Church? Those who prophesied its dissolution little understood the men and women who sat in these pews during the heroic ages. Was it to be expected that the descendants of Howard and Claflin, Hutchinson and Raymond, and their associates, would let Plymouth Church die? No, but it was to be expected that they would take up the work of their fathers, summon a new leader suited to the new time, and go on to still more consecrated work for God and for humanity. The children, strong and full of hope, are here; but the fathers, those who called the young man from the West, who supported him in all the stormy years in which he was the champion of the poor, the outcast, the oppressed — those who saw that imperial head blossom into a crown of glory in the service of humanity, who were as brave and patient even as he who led them — where are they? Nearly all are even now with their pastor in "the land that knows no sorrow." But the earthly ministry must go on; and so the second pastor and his assistant whom we install to-night take up their work. Of that work I may not speak, but I may repeat words which sound clear and full through all these radiant remembrances and ardent anticipations: "It came to pass as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and cried, My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof! And he saw him no more. And he took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him."

ADDRESS OF DR. J. M. WHITON,

PASTOR OF TRINITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, NEW-YORK CITY.

My theme to-night is the Pre-historic Episcopate. I call it so simply for distinction, not because it is not fully historic, but simply to distinguish it from a successor to which the term has been of late familiarly appropriated. Broad Churchmen, like Dean Stanley, tell us that it is as clearly witnessed in the records of the first century as its successor in the records of the second and subsequent centuries. It is, in fact, the sort of episcopate which we have been engaged in recognizing as established in this church to-day. In it we are now proceeding to install brethren whom, if we spoke of them by the usual phraseology of the New Testament, we should term bishops rather than pastors.

Now, my simple thesis concerning this pre-historic, or old historic, episcopate is this: that just as it was needed in the ancient cities where Christianity was first planted, so is it needed in the modern cities. Our Episcopal brethren have been offering us the "historic episcopate" as part of a basis for Christian unity. For aught I know we may all come to agree to that by virtue of a wise definition; for there is great virtue in such definition. But at any rate I think we must all agree that an essential of Christian efficiency is in the pre-historic episcopate; that is, if modern churches are to be something

more than mutual benefit clubs, if they are also to be bodies for active benevolent work.

Now, as to this pre-historic episcopate, as I have called it, its field was a parish, not a diocese of parishes; its personnel was not singular but plural; it required for its accommodation more than a single chair—it needed a bench.

The little church at Philippi, Paul's letter shows, had quite a number of these parish bishops or, as we should say, pastors. The seven deacons, so-called, of the Jerusalem church, a very high authority contends, were not deacons, but pastors. And if this great church can get along perfectly well with only two, it may, perhaps, be attributed to that superior energy in virtue of which a single Occidental is supposed to be equivalent to any number of Orientals.

But if we compare the situations now and then I do not think it will seem quite so clear that one man now is equal to half a dozen men then. The times then were neither fast nor fastidious. The preaching function, that is now so inflated and overworked, was then mainly in the rudimentary stage of short prayer-meeting talks. There were no libraries to digest in preparation for the pulpit. But one book was needed—the Old Testament and fragments of the New. There were no "sacred orations," as Dr. Shedd calls them, or essays, to be gotten up twice a week, up to Athenian tastes. Those parochial bishops were engrossed with administrative duties. They were obliged to arbitrate disputes which now go to the courts; they were required to enforce morality by discipline much more than is necessary now, although, perhaps, more is required now than is attended to; and they also had a vast field of charity to work, although not, I think, greater than our city fields, if they are thoroughly worked. So, striking a balance on such a brief comparison, the time anciently given to arbitrations and to discipline might be transferred to meet the demands of the modern sermon without finding very much cause to reduce the number of parish bishops to the unity in which now they are generally found.

I, of course, believe that in business energy an Occidental can outdo an Oriental; but in Christian energy, man by man, I do not think the superiority is so manifest as to account for the extremely disproportionate number in the ancient and modern parish bishoprics compared. I am aware, however, that a modern claim to superior wisdom has been noticed by the Yankee poet,

"They didn't know everything down in Judee."

But I think they knew one thing which not even all of us have yet found out, and that is, that a village method will not work as well as a city method. A single presbyter might suffice for a small suburban hamlet, but not even for so small a city as Philippi with its sapling church. One pastor to four or five hundred church-members, I think, would have seemed to them a number truly singular. The village method, according to which over the same counter are sold cottons and molasses, fish-hooks and crockery, has disappeared except from our city churches. In this age of science everything is said to be according to some law; and this is according to that untoward law of human nature by which, in things religious, improvements make their

way most tardily of all. The solitary modern survivor of the ancient bench of seven is harder put to it than ever Paul was to become all things to all men. Said Pope:

"A bishop? — what you will."

It is just so; his business is everything.

The diversity of gifts which apostolic teaching regards as distributed among many is by our one-man theory concentrated in the single pastor; and what can come — what could come — of such a theory except failure? And failure is manifest and confessed. The multitudes outside the churches are not reached. A large part of the working force of the church is not brought into service for lack of organization and leadership. The fact is that our one-wheeled machine cannot do the business, and we must put on more wheels; we must convert the wheelbarrow into an omnibus.

Now, I am limited. I cannot touch details except in a most cursory way. I may barely name three departments, each one of which seems to me capable of absorbing a whole man.

The first is the teaching function of the pulpit and the lecture-room, conjoined with a general superintendence.

The next is the department of charities. Now this, in the ancient times, was no annex, as it is so commonly now; it was the central part of the field, according to St. Jerome's saying, that the glory of a bishop was to relieve the poor. The business of the Church toward those that fall and are trodden under in the fierce struggle of modern life, is not to turn them over to the city authorities, or to devolve them upon the secular fraternities, but it is to be Christ to them. And this, it seems to me, necessitates the special ministry of a trained and experienced hand in organizing and applying relief. Much more than money, this is a giving of self in constant watchfulness and sympathy; and for this an undivided man in many a neighborhood is necessary; not simply as overseer of the poor, but the overseer of the helpers of the poor; not only as a worker himself, but as the head of a corps of good Samaritans.

The other department that I wish to speak of is the educational. Of this the Sunday-school seems to me the smallest part. There is a large work besides this, in the congregation and outside of it. The young life of the congregation needs attractive classes and courses to indoc-trinate it into far more of Christian history and Christian ethics and Christian philanthropy than it has been able under our arrangements to learn yet. In this way a far higher average of Christian intelligence would be developed throughout our churches. But beyond this, the school-master leading to Christ is needed for the outside multitude. A great work of what I would call Christian pedagogics, through lectures, concerts, classes, tuition and training of various kinds, down to, or up to, cooking and athletics, would make the Church a source of quickening to very many dull and drudging lives, and convince them of their mistake, under which they now inveterately regard it in most cases as a club existing for its own benefit.

Like the English University extension among shopmen, mechanics, and miners, this Church extension is needed in an educational way to befriend and to guide for Christian ends human aspirations for the enrichment of the dull routine of work-a-day life.

At the conclusion of Dr. Whiton's address Dr. Abbott and Mr. Bliss took their seats on the platform, and Dr. Meredith addressed the audience as follows :

ADDRESS OF DR. MEREDITH.

I DARE to detain this audience for a few moments at this point simply because my friend and brother, Dr. Abbott, did not this afternoon so much as request me to do it, as announced to the Council that I would do it. I am glad of an opportunity, however, of speaking a word; and it would be to me a supreme pleasure if I could hope to add to the interest and impressiveness of this occasion, in itself so interesting and impressive.

The older I grow, the more I study the Word of God, and the more I engage in the plain, every-day, practical work of a Christian minister, the more profoundly and unquestioningly I believe in Christianity, in its perfect simplicity, in its perfect adaptation to the needs of men, in its infinite power to lift up and to bless humanity; and my heart goes out in gratitude to God more and more for the method of his mercy.

I am glad that God came to this world in his Son. The first verse of your Sunday-school lesson for the next Sunday is: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people," and by "the tender mercy of our God the day spring from on high hath visited us." I am glad that God, coming in his Son Jesus Christ to redeem this world, did it in the way in which he is doing. I am glad that he did not introduce his saving mercies as a power outside of men and above them—that he grafted his Gospel, the atonement that is by Jesus Christ, on to the old stock of humanity; that he gathered a few men about him, and said, "I am the life," and then put life into them; that he said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," and the one life that is in the stock is in the branch. And then I am glad that he lifted up his eyes and prayed to his Father: "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them." Oneness of life with Christ, oneness of motive with Christ, because redemption started from that point. God so loved that he gave. Philosophize as we please, that is the beginning. Nobody gets back of that. Love moved God. Love moved him in Jesus Christ as he was among men, and Christ prayed that God Almighty's love might throb in us as the motive of our lives. And then I am glad that he said in that same prayer to his Father, "As thou has sent me into the world, even so have I sent them." Oneness of mission with Jesus Christ. Life, motive, mission.

And then Christ himself said to his disciples, when they were troubled because he told them he was going to Jerusalem to suffer many things of the chief priests and of the scribes, and Peter said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee"—he called the multitude around him and said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily." One life, one motive, one mission, one experience with Jesus Christ, taking up the cross as he took it. And then he said one thing more: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children

of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Oneness of destiny with Jesus Christ. Oh, that is a God-like religion that takes you and me up into the scheme of redemption and makes us redeemers in our measure! One life, one motive, one experience, one mission, and one destiny with the Lord Jesus Christ. I leave that thought as my contribution to this hour.

Dear brethren and friends of this church, you do not install a priest here to-night. We believe in the priesthood of the people. A priest is a man who does things for other people. You do not install a priest or priests here to-night; you install a pastor and an assistant pastor; you install men who are to lead you and with whom you must work, and whose efforts you must second if there is to be success here.

It has already been remarked that, magnificent as were the gifts of the man who so long stood in this pulpit, yet he could not have been all that he was without Plymouth Church. There is not a man on the face of the earth, and there never has been since God made men, able to be what Henry Ward Beecher was, standing alone; and there is no man on earth to-day able to make a success of Plymouth Church, only as Plymouth Church, each member realizing for himself his own grand privileges and opportunity, puts itself into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ in an utter and absolute consecration, and then at the service of these leaders does God's work in this part of the world. And there is no defeat for any church, I do not care what may be the conditions of the community about it, whose members will put themselves in that position and realize their glorious privileges in the Gospel of the Son of God. We are talking about people moving away from this church and that church and the other church, and that they cannot take care of a church here or there. There isn't a spot on the face of this continent where there are people that twenty-five consecrated men and women of God cannot take care of a church if they will put themselves into it and look to God for his blessing.

I say again that I am glad to have had the privilege just to say this word. I did not expect in the least to say it, but I have said it, and now we will unite, all of us, in one earnest prayer to God.

Dr. Meredith then offered the Installing Prayer, Drs. Abbott and Roberts joining with him in the laying on of hands.

The choir sang the 939th Hymn, and at the close of the music, the Rev. Dr. Phillips Brooks, of Boston, spoke as follows:

ADDRESS OF THE REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS, D. D.,
RECTOR OF TRINITY CHURCH, BOSTON.

FROM the moment when we met this morning, my friends, every one of us has realized how impossible it was for us to look forward without looking back. It is so in every great and critical moment, in every moment which brings to a focus that which has been, and then opens up the prospect and the promise of that which is to be. But it has been especially so here; and as I stand for a very few moments where I count it a very great privilege to stand, in the place in which he has

so often stood whom we counted the foremost preacher of America and of our land and of our times, I cannot help feeling with what beautiful fitness our minds have ever been turning from the bright prospect which is opening before this church to the bright promise in history which lies behind it. You have had in Plymouth Church the greatest preacher of America and of our century, and, whatever has been said with regard to the abundance of his power and the vast diversity of his gifts, it seems to me that the feeling which we have to-night—that we have had all to-day as we have thought of him—has been the simplicity and the power that belonged to him, and it is in the simplicity of the past and in the simplicity of the future that the great power of Plymouth Church abides. Mr. Beecher was many things, but he was in everything the Christian preacher; and the one greatest of all things, it seems to me, which this land has to thank him for is that he has borne testimony—a testimony which shall be heard forever—to the greatness and dignity of the Christian preachership. I do not mean simply by the uttering of sermons, though they were fine, and no sermons have been heard that were like his; but he has declared that everything the Christian minister does in every department of his work, whether it be in the administration of charity, in the management of parochial machinery, in the administration of the Christian sacrament, in everything he is the Christian preacher manifesting the power of the Christian preachership and the administration of the Christian Gospel. In everything he is making felt upon mankind the power of the eternal Christian truths of the fatherhood of God and the sonship of mankind, of the love of Heaven, and of the possibility of earth, and that which we look forward to is the regeneration of the Christian ministry in its great preaching power. Whatever your new pastors shall find to do, they shall be preachers forever and continually; and, therefore, any one who in any degree and in any place is struggling with the work of Christian preachership rejoices in the past and for the future, and is thankful for what to-day we have been prepared to look forward to and believe is to be.

The one thought that is upon my mind to-night is the power of that Christian preachership, which, with the abundance of the ways of its exercise, always concentrates itself in this great power of the human voice by which the man always attaches his soul's belief to other souls, which, making it their belief, shall find in it the power of their life; but having its essence in this, that the Christian preacher must have his nature open upon both sides—upon the one side to God, and upon the other side to man. All missing things are to be supplied by truth and the God who comes through truth to men. All communication between God on one side and human nature and its needs on the other side is of the essence of the Christian preachership. And so it is in the great preachership of the past and in the rich preacherships of the future that we rejoice that we are able to stand here and congratulate Plymouth Church to-day.

It seems to me the one thing we want to assure ourselves of, my friends, is this, that there is no problem before the Christian Church and the world, however puzzling it may be, however it may seem to be puzzling to the most ingenious of our thoughts, that does not

really, must not really, find its solution ultimately in the increased energy and power, the increased energy and strength, of the Christian ministry, and most largely the Christian preachership.

What are the problems that are before the Church to-day? I would not think for one moment that there is anything strange in the fact that I should have the privilege of standing before you to-night, that there should be anything strange that a man calling himself by one Christian name should say Godspeed to a brother of another name as he starts forth on the great road of a ministry like this. But we do know how men whose hearts are one are separated in their divided lives; we do know how denomination draws itself apart from denomination, each bearing its different name and waving it upon its banner as if it were the sign of a separation, and not of a common loyalty to a great master and a common cause. Is there anything that is going to bring our broken Church together and make it one great body of Jesus Christ? With all my heart I believe it is nothing but a deeper fidelity within the Church, a more complete energizing of every one of these particles of the Church. It is not by arrangements, it is not by pronunciamientos, it is not by constitutions, it is not by conventions; but when every part of the Church shall be fired by the furnace of its spirit with consecration to the Master, with love of his truth and with entire love of the souls of men, there shall be nothing left of the disunion, the disruption of Christendom; but the great Christian communion shall build itself with the perfect fidelity of the entire inspired Church.

And what is another question that is before us perpetually? It is the question of the separation of dogma and life. Men are driven foolishly to say on one side that dogma is everything, and on the other that life is everything. As if there could be any life that did not spring out of truth! As if there could be any truth that was really felt that did not manifest itself in life! It is not by doctrine becoming less earnest in filling itself with all the purity of God. It is only by both dogma and life, doctrine and life, becoming vitalized through and through that they shall reach after and find another. Only when things are alive do they reach out for the fullness of their life and claim that which belongs to them.

What is another problem that is before us? The relation of the Christian Church to this great human world. It is not separate from it. It has no business here except when it represents the ideal of that life which is in reality all around us. The Christian Church is nothing except a specimen of that which all humanity ought to be struggling to be. The Christian Church, if it completely realized itself at this moment, would be nothing except the fulfillment of that which is the possibility of all mankind. Let the Christian Church, then, be energized; let it be full of its virtuous spirit; let it be animated with all the love of truth, the love of God and of the world, and then how it shall reach out and claim in unsuspected places those things which belong to it! Wherever there is the power of God, wherever there is the wisdom of God—that is to say, wherever there is the essential Christ, the Christ that is manifest and historic in the soul—the Church shall send forth its claim and say, “That belongs to us.”

One of the strangest and richest phenomena of the future is going to be the Christian Church finding herself where she least expected to

find herself; but she will find it not by less believing, but by more believing, in herself and in the power of the Christ whom she serves.

It is because these vast problems are pressing upon the souls of men; it is because of the separation of Christian from Christian under different names; it is because of the separation of doctrine from life, as if those were antagonists which are part of one living whole, neither of them having any real existence except as it is welded to the other; it is because the Church stands off from the world when she ought to be forever claiming the world and finding the power of her own life in that humanity of which she simply represents the divine ideal, the purpose and the ultimate perfection; it is because these are the great questions that are on the soul of man to-day, the questions which once settled the world shall have come to the fullness and completeness of its life; it is because of their earnest ministry, the consecration of devoted men—that we rejoice to-day to see two consecrated men giving themselves in this great field, sanctified by all the past and opening out of all the past such a rich and glorious future; that we rejoice to see them consecrating themselves and receiving the cordial welcome of the Churches as they begin their work.

The next twenty years of the Christian ministry may be something in this world such as no ministry has been in any twenty years of the past. For the next twenty years, and many more years to come, if it pleases him, may God's blessing rest upon these brethren of ours who to-day are made the ministers of Plymouth Church.

ADDRESS OF REV. ALEXANDER M'KENZIE, D. D., OF CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

I FIND myself quite sharing in the hopeful views of my friend who has just been speaking. Indeed, one has been impressed all day, I think, with the intense reality of everything, how practical this service is. Every word that has been spoken seems to have come from the heart, and to be laying itself down upon this great and needy world, that in some way it may lift it up into the fulfillment of its destiny. And I found myself asking again and again as this day has gone on what it is that this church is to do, what it is to be, what it is to stand for, what it is to give to the community. And when the mind runs out on to the thousand activities which have been touched upon and sketched to-day, I find that I have come back of all these special things that we are doing to what seemed to me to be the grand truth which we need to repeat, and to again repeat, as standing within this church to mark its character and its power, and as embodied in its life and power that it may be still felt in this great community of which it is a part. It seems to me that there is nothing in the world that the world needs so much to-day as to know God, to see God, to feel the presence of God; and no man hath seen him at any time, neither can see him. The only dogma sent me is in the bosom of the Father. He hath declared him, and if you know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, this is eternal life. There can be nothing so sublime, there can be nothing so profound, there can be nothing so vital to every interest in this year and in the centuries that are before us, as that we should know God, that we should make others know God, that this divine presence which is about us should be realized in the

thoughts and in the lives of men. Now, it is precisely this which the Church stands for. When Jesus said, "Ye believe in God," he uttered a truth that might be repeated to-day; and when he said, "Believe also in me," he uttered a commandment which has been fulfilled to-day. We stand beyond the Apostles to whom he spoke that day, for we believe in God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent; and this always, this everywhere, this in any man's being, this is eternal life. And this, I suppose, we may take for granted the Church feels, this the Church holds as its great and peculiar treasure. Not that any man realizes it as he ought, not that any man lives in the force of this truth as it is possible for him to live, but that we are in some measure possessed of it; that what light we have springs from it, that what principle and promise we cherish depend upon it, and that our work in the world is to be witnesses for God.

We never can come to the fullness of the incarnation; we never can be sure of any man. He that hath seen him hath seen the Father. If it can be true, and it must be true, as our Lord himself hath taught us, that we can let our light shine before men so that men shall forget us and think of God, and there shall come to us that uttermost renown, to be lost in oblivion while God lives and reigns in conscience and consciousness of light.

Now, we do not quite comprehend this. I am sure we do not quite feel this, that we are always confessing that there is a Presence filling this house closer to us than the air or the spirit within the air. We have not listened, perhaps, to that prophetic, that mighty saying of the great English singer, that God is never so far off as even to be near. The moment one comes to feel this thought then life changes, the very blood in its forces quickens, the spirit grows firmer, the eye brighter, the voice stronger, the whole life is inspired and becomes an inspiration. Why? Stop for a moment, pause long enough to think that God is here. Nearer to you than the friend at your side, nearer to you than your own thoughts, so near that nearness is remote. And God is here. That is what we have to say; that is what the world does not know. Whatever it may reason, whatever it may believe, the world does not know. It wakes from its sleep so often as it wakes from its sleep to say, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not!"

To stand then, and manifest this truth, to speak it with the lips, to illustrate it in the life, to make those who listen to us hear it and those who believe in us believe it, this is the mission and ministry of life, and for this this church stands — stands in its great entirety of its membership, stands in its divided personality, so that in a thousand places at the same time it may be saying, "Lo! God is here." This single church, in a thousand places at the same instant, can be making a thousand men think of God.

It is to go out, then, and along these busy thoroughfares to stop men for a moment and whisper to them, "God is here." It is to go down into the laboratory of the chemist; it is to go where the scholar pores over his books; it is to go at midnight up into the lonely watch-tower where the bold adventurer works among the bright dissevered worlds and loses himself among the splendid stars; to go down in the workshops and talk to the masters, talk to the workmen; to go into the

palaces and into the hovels; to go where the feast is spread and the scant crust is on the table; to say everywhere, over and over again, "God is here. God is here."

Think what it must mean. Suppose one comes into the full realization of this truth, and it becomes the habit of his mind to think of it? Suppose that, following the teaching of him who has revealed God and who has made it one part of God's revelation that the Almighty desires to have every man enter into his inner chamber and close the door, for God has something to say in that intercourse of God alone with the man,—suppose one follows this, how can it be that there shall not be in this intercourse behind the closed door of the inner chamber such union as will refresh and invigorate the soul, and a man shall come out, and they that look upon him will see that his face is shining?

We have had many men in history. I think you may search human annals with a candle to find a solitary man who has had a great, strong, influential spiritual life who has not spent some of the most sacred hours of life in the inner chamber. No one but God and the child of God. You find it in great men. You find Albert Barnes, whom we sometimes feel behind our times, and so far before his times that they silenced him for his teaching, confessing in his old age: "If I have gained anything on the one hand, if I am a better minister, if I have gained anything of truth, it has come from those early morning hours in my study in the church when I have held communion with God over his Word." You find it in a greater man, a man who perhaps beyond all English teachers has impressed himself upon the thought of our time; you find him, this marvelous teacher, this wonderful preacher, more mighty perhaps through his books than with his spoken word, awaking at morning that he might talk with God, awaking at midnight that he might talk with God. They came upon him sometimes, his son says, opening the door carelessly, as he rose from the altar; his altar was a chair, on it lay his Greek Testament; his hands had been pressed into his eyes till it seemed as if his eyes were driven back into his head. What wonder that a man who held such a communion with God should be the mighty teacher that Maurice must be to the end of time.

I am told that a man somewhere wandering in the woods found himself far upon a cliff. He did not know where he was. Standing upon its upper part, he looked down to see if he could anywhere detect his way or find any one who should speak to him. Far below there came a solitary man walking along, looking up into the light, his head bared, while he held communion with all that was about him, and the stranger watched him. He came steadily on. He came where, under the trees, he could get the vision of the clear heavens. He bent his knee. He lifted up his heart. He lifted up his voice. He saw God. He heard God. He spoke to God. He came down from that mountain, and what wonder that you have said of him what you have been saying to-day—what wonder that he made this temple the House of God, what wonder that there are tens of thousands of men to whom he revealed God, whom no man hath seen at any time, nor can see, who reveals himself through the hearts that love him and through the lives that serve him.

But what comes of it? It is not the mere revelation of God as the Creator. It is God coming nearer to us than that. There may be this close, this protracted communion with him within the closef; there may be the more ripe communion with him; but it cannot be that any man sees God. It cannot be that we have seen God, but there comes into our lives a force, an augmenting force, that was not in our lives before. Say it to these men along the streets; it is what Plymouth Church is for. Say it to these busy, tempted, struggling men and women; say it to these young men who are carving out eternity with their strong hands. What comes of it? Tell them they have a Father, and that that Father is here. They are not old, they are not orphans, they are not poor. Show them as best you can. Show them that if God is every man's father, then every man is every other man's brother. I do not believe you will ever preach the brotherhood of man to men until you have preached the fatherhood of God to man. Begin at the upper side; follow Nature, follow history, follow philosophy, follow common sense. God is our Father, my Savior, my Master; and we are brethren. And when that thought comes down into the minds of men, there has entered into them a thought that must relieve and uplift them, and teach them this preserving care of God. The sparrow upon the house-top finds its beak embedded in the snow and the frost lying heavy upon its feathers — there shall not one sparrow out of a thousand million sparrows fall, and God not know it. There is not a man in Brooklyn who is not worth more than all the sparrows that ever lived, ten thousand times more than all the sparrows that ever fell. And who will despair; who will turn in despair, dismay, suicide, defeat, so long as there is about him this preserving power and guiding power and governing power? The world given over to confusion? Not at all. Men love to work out their own futures. Wrong upon the throne, right upon the scaffold? Not at all. It is only the accident of the time, the chance cloud that happens to be passing. We hear at times a Sentinel, who moves about from place to place, and whispers to the vast space around the world that all is well. And no man despairs, no man lies down defeated, no man slacks his hand till he has lost his faith in God; and no man in all the district committed to this church turns to dismay as long as the thousand members of this church in a thousand different places are witnessing to the presence, to the providence, to the governance of God. And if we rise to those higher things and look within this air that is about us, that is full of God, we find the love, within the love the sacrifice, God's agony, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. We have not made too much of the appeal to men; we have not made enough of the redemption of Christ. It does seem to me sometimes that what we need to preach to-day in preaching redemption is that suffering of God before the world was. To my mind out of all comparison the most touching part in the parable of the prodigal son is not the son hungry — I am glad that he was hungry; it is not even the son coming back; the most touching, the divinest part of that parable is that father waiting, that father longing, that father going out, turning his eyes down the road, running, seeing his boy, falling on his neck, kissing him, bringing him the robe, the ring, the shoes he had kept ready and the calf he had been fattening, falling on his neck and kissing him again.

Let men feel that God loves them, and they have felt more than the cross alone can testify; it is the eternal love that is crucified; it is Jesus, God's love, that gives itself for us. It is God so loving the world that he comes down where the world is that he may save it. And this appeals to them. If anything will call them, this will call them. Men are not very often driven to God by the husks or by the nakedness or the sorrow of life. What brings men back? Many things. I do believe that if there is anything within the whole compass of thought that will make a runaway boy come home, it is the thought of his mother standing day and night in the door watching for him; it is the thought of the father looking down the road and running to meet him. Stand for God in his eternal atonement, and you stand for God who has saved the world. And so it is. I need not prolong the illustration. I am sure that we shall feel the marvelous power that is in it, feel the wonderful mission committed to this church, the wonderful opportunity of this day falling upon two men, falling upon twenty men, falling upon a thousand men and women here to sustain and show God, in anticipation of that divinest moment to which Revelation points us, the highest vision that we have of the eternal glory—ever comprehending God, seeing God.

Brethren, the loftiest sentence touching human destiny and human immortality, the loftiest sentence in the Bible, is this: "Beloved, now are we children of God. And it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he doth appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Dr. MEREDITH: It is, as I understand, forty-three years ago since there was an installation service in Plymouth Church. Forty of those years have been filled up with that marvelous ministry that is familiar to every thinking man the world over. I look down here to-night, and I see the face of the man who preached the installation sermon that night, and he was forty-three and more years old then. During all these years God has continued his life, and it is a real pleasure to see his face here. Dr. Beecher, God bless you [applause], and fold you with your dear companion in his own arms, and make the sun of Heaven shine brighter and clearer on you every day you stay here, and every day until you pass out into the eternal sunshine of God. [Applause.] I have now the very great pleasure of introducing to you the Rev. Lyman Abbott, D.D. [applause]; and I want to say something for him. You are all looking at him, every last one of you, and you know him perfectly. He is looking into two thousand faces. Now, don't get grumpy if he does n't know you the next time he sees you on the street; but walk up and introduce yourself, and tell him that you belong to his church. [Applause and laughter.]

ADDRESS OF DR. LYMAN ABBOTT.

THAT might be very much needed counsel in some places; but it is n't in Plymouth Church. I am not going to make a speech this evening—it would be quite out of the question—but there are two or three simple things that I want to say.

In the first place, I want, in the simplest possible words, to wel-

come, in the heartiest and most emphatic manner, my associate in the Gospel ministry, Mr. Howard Bliss, to his work among us. I am not going to give you, my dear brother, the formal hand of fellowship on this platform, because you and I have grasped hands more than once in informal shakings, in genuine, earnest fellowship before now. I have long known him to love and to honor him. When I knew that I was coming to Plymouth Church, and that I was to have an assistant — without the promised co-operation of one I would n't have undertaken single-handed this work — my first thought turned to him, and I gladly waited myself the year, and I am very glad that Plymouth Church had faith enough in my judgment to wait also a year, for his coming. If you knew his Christian fidelity, his earnestness of consecration, his genuineness of faith, his simple manliness, and that broad and comprehensive sympathy, quick and responsive, which we call tact, you would have given even greater felicitation to me and to our people than you have done. I want also to indorse in the strongest terms what I was very glad to hear said in the other room by Dr. Donald, and glad to hear said on this platform by Dr. Whiton, that I welcome Mr. Howard S. Bliss to a cordial and united work, in which there shall be neither superiority nor inferiority, but a common fellowship in the pastorate of this church, and in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then I want to say another word. Dr. Hastings told me that on one occasion some elders came to him to ask him about the qualifications of a certain young man for the ministry, and he spoke highly of the gentleman; and after he had got through describing the qualifications of the minister he said, "And he has a most excellent minister's wife." "Yes," said the elders, "perhaps; but we don't call the minister's wife." "No," said Dr. Hastings, "I know you don't call the minister's wife, but you will find she will come." [Laughter.] Now, I also want to say, brethren in this Council, that if you knew what two admirable ministers' wives you have been installing to-day you would be pleased. [Applause.] Well, I am glad you take it on trust.

And then there is one other thing I want to say. Plymouth Church has rightly been supposed to stand for the liberty of the churches. It has done so in the past, and I think, if the exigency should arise, it would be found able to do so in the future. We believe in the right of a church to form its own creed, administer its own discipline, and regulate its own affairs. We also believe, I think, — I do — in the right of any number of churches to combine together and form a larger organization with the same liberty that belongs to the individual one. If they do that they surrender some of their individual rights for the benefit and advantage that accrue from the more compact organization. But we do not believe that those rights of individual liberty are ever to be taken from them unless they surrender them deliberately and of purpose for the benefit of the larger organizations.

We also believe in the fellowship of the Churches. It would be very strange, brethren, if we did not. We remember how, in a time of great trial, men and brethren came from all over this country and remained in this church, not a few short hours, nor one short day,

but day after day and day after day, that they might sustain our hands and encourage our hearts and help and strengthen us in our sorrow and in our struggle. It would be very strange if we did not believe in the fellowship of the Churches. And we remember another time—our memory would be very short if we could forget it—when on this very platform there stood representatives, not only of every evangelical Church, but of some Churches not counted evangelical, that brought here their sympathy and their fellowship and their words of comfort and inspiration in the hour of our great and overwhelming sorrow. It would be very strange if we did not believe in the fellowship of the Churches.

I am a busy man measurably, and I think I can understand in some measure what it means when such busy men as those I see before me, and those that are on the platform here, turn aside from their hard work, and sacrifice that which is the most precious of all things to an overworked minister, hours, and even days, for the sake of Christian fellowship. Brethren, you must not go away from Plymouth Church without a word of thanks, first, from me personally for your kind friendship to me, and then in the name and on behalf of Plymouth Church for your fellowship with Plymouth Church, and last of all, and most of all, for Plymouth Church and for me, for the warm, sacred, the ever to be remembered words you have spoken here through your representatives concerning the pastor and teacher who has gone from us only to beckon us on to follow him. We thank you heartily, sincerely, simply. I am sorry there are no more eloquent words and no more eloquent speaker to render our thanksgiving to you.

The audience joined in Hymn 660,—“Love divine, all love excelling,”—to the tune of “Beecher,” and the Rev. Mr. Bliss pronounced the benediction and dismissed the audience.



THE NEW THEOLOGY.¹

BY THE REV. LYMAN ABBOTT, D. D.

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."—1 COR. xi. 1.

IN this same Epistle Paul condemns the Corinthians for saying — one, I am of Paul ; another, I am of Apollos ; a third, I am of Cephas ; a fourth, I am of Christ. It would appear, then, that there is a right and a wrong way of following men. Paul forbids them to be followers of him in one place ; he bids them to be followers of him in another. When in the Church of Christ individual leaders are picked out, and men gather round them, making of themselves a sect, and separating themselves from other followers of Christ by the distinguishing characteristics of their chosen leader, they violate the fundamental teachings of the New Testament. When a man says, I am a Calvinist, an Arminian, I am a Wesleyan, I am a Brownist, for the purpose of separating himself from men who are not Calvinists, Arminians, Wesleyans, or Brownists, he is running a division line between the Church of Christ, and Paul's question may well startle him : "Is Christ then divided?" But, on the other hand, it is true that we are separated from one another in one sense, yet in a deeper sense may be joined together by our moods and our mental habits. We affiliate by reason of social considerations, by reason of intellectual congenialities, by reason of temperamental conditions ; and it is perfectly legitimate for us to recognize these variations, and to unite and fellowship one with another in an especial manner because of these congenialities. One may thus follow another with the condition which Paul attaches in our verse — that is, provided he follows him only that he may better and more effectually follow Christ. "Be ye followers of me," says Paul ; but then he adds, "Even as I also am of Christ." The difference between schools and creeds within the Church of Christ is not, as it is sometimes represented, a mere difference of uniforms and banners : it is a difference of habit, it is a difference of temperament, it is a difference of intellectual and spiritual structure, as well. There is no harm in this, provided in all our differences we recognize the deeper and the larger and the more inclusive unity. A great army is marching to one point, and a Sherman is leading it ; but there is not room on one road for the whole army to march abreast ; and one

¹ Sermon preached in Plymouth Church, Sunday morning, January 19, 1890 — the Sunday following the Installing Council. Reported stenographically by Henry S. Winans, and revised by the author.

army corps under McPherson, and another army corps under Schofield, and another army corps under Thomas, take separate roads; and I follow McPherson, and you follow Schofield, and you follow Thomas. But we are all following Sherman; we all have one common aim in view, one common purpose, and we shall all share at last in the common victory. Now, in this sense, I have no hesitation whatever in saying I am a follower of Henry Ward Beecher. Not that I agree in all that he said; not that I think just as he thought; certainly not that I recognize in him any intellectual or spiritual authority or master-ship over me. But I am glad to count myself, in the language of our text, a follower of Henry Ward Beecher as Henry Ward Beecher followed Christ.

We had this last week a Council which, meeting in this church, was in some respects a singular one. It is not the first time in the history of Congregationalism that men of other denominations have met together on a common platform; but it certainly is the first time, so far as my knowledge goes, in which so many eminent representative men of different schools of thought have united together in an ecclesiastical function, have united together in directly and formally inducting into a chair a religious teacher: a man who believes only in immersion helping to induct into office a man who believes that sprinkling is just as efficacious as immersion; a man who believes in the liturgy and the historic apostolate helping to induct into office a man who prefers the Congregational form and method of worship; a man who is a Calvinist helping to induct into office a man who would not call himself a Calvinist. In this respect the Council was peculiar, and in some sense exceptional. What does it mean? Does it mean that we are coming to think that creeds are of no value—that it is no matter what a man believes? Is it true that we are coming to think that emotion is everything and thinking is nothing? Is it true that we are coming to a state of mere individualism in life and disintegration in church? Is it true that, as organization is going on and men are coming to be more united in secular affairs, disintegration is going on and men are coming to be more indifferent to organization and to care less about separations in ecclesiastical affairs? I do not think so. I believe that school of thought—if I may so express myself—which was represented in this Council believes in clear thinking. I think it believes in definite purpose. I think it believes in profound principles. It was not a mere gathering of emotionalists; it was not a mere gathering of individualists; it was not a mere body of men that came together and said, "We do not care what you think or what you are going to teach; you are a good fellow, and we will let you in"—it was a body of men who stood for certain broad, profound, inclusive principles. There has grown up in our time—that is, in the time of the older of you in this congregation—what may be termed the Broad Church, or the Broad Theology school. It is in all Christian churches and in all Christian lands. Is there any common bond that unites these men? Is there any common thought that underlies them? Does their coming together stand for any united, providential, significant intellectual and religious movement? Without attempting to answer this question comprehensively and thoroughly, and certainly without professing to speak

by any authority for others, I desire to try to set before you a little of what seems to me to have been in the past the theology, if you please, of Plymouth Church, and the theology of a much broader and larger fellowship than merely that of Plymouth Church; what seem to me to have been some of the fundamental teachings of Henry Ward Beecher, and to be fundamental in the much larger teaching than that of Henry Ward Beecher; what are some of the fundamental principles that unite us as a school of thought in one great inorganic but none the less providential movement.

We believe, then, that religion is preëminently human and natural. We believe that religion is for men, and for all men — for all classes, all kinds, all conditions of men. I believe that Henry Ward Beecher's antagonism to Calvinism was not an antagonism to the doctrine of divine sovereignty. He sometimes presented that doctrine as eloquently as it was ever presented on any platform. It was not antagonism to the doctrine of a divine and absolute control, to law, to conscience, to duty — all these were represented more than once in thunderings and lightnings from this platform. It was opposition to any and every form, any and every conception, of religion which represented it as for a selected class of men. It was opposition to what is called the doctrine of election; that is, it was opposition to the notion that religion was for a priesthood, or for a race, or for a class, or for selected favorites, or for a peculiar people. He stood — we stand — for this: that the religion of the Bible, the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, all true and spiritual religion, is for all men, and that all men, unless they are absolute lunatics and incompetents, have a competency for religion, a capacity for religion. Over against the doctrine that was proclaimed — shall I say in the pulpit — of the Society for Ethical Culture in New-York winter before last, that ethics are for all men and spiritual religion only for the few, we stand for the faith that spiritual religion, the religion of faith, the religion of hope, the religion of love, the religion that gets a grasp on eternity, the religion that walks in the light of eternity, the religion that can lay hold of God, the religion by which God lays hold of man, is for all men, the ignorant as well as the wise, and the rich as well as the poor.

So we believe that religion is for the whole man. It is the development of body and soul and spirit. It is not merely for the spiritual nature. It is not merely the development of conscience, the development of love. It is the development of muscle as well as of brain. It is the development of intellect as well as of heart. It is the development of the whole nature. It is by no mere accident that Charles Kingsley, one of the prophets of the "new theology," stood for what he called muscular Christianity. We believe in a religion that uses the Bible, that uses the prayer-meeting, that uses the Sunday-school, and that is also and equally ready to use the gymnasium or the bowling-alley. We believe in a religion that is ready to use any and every instrument that tends to fit men for life here, because we believe that the way to fit men for life hereafter is by fitting them for life here.

We believe, therefore, in a religion that measures all instruments by their effect on humanity. The value of all religious instruments depends absolutely, wholly upon this: what kind of a character do they make, what kind of men do they produce. Religion is not something

whereby man serves God—it is something whereby God serves man. God does not need our service, but we do need God's service. Religion is not man taking hold of the ropes and pulling God's car and giving him a ride—it is God reaching down and lifting man up, God bearing man, as Moses says, as the eagle bears its young upon its wings. So all religious instruments are to be measured by their power to inspire and elevate and broaden and enrich and educate and develop and redeem and sanctify man. Therefore it is that men of this school, in whatever denomination they are, lay less stress upon particular instruments—from the time of Paul, who brushed the old rite of circumcision aside when he found it interfering with the development of manhood, down to the men of this day who count sacraments less significant than preaching, who measure the value of methods and forms by the effects which they produce. We only ask of the plow whether it turns up the soil; and we only ask of the doctrine of sin, Does it make men cry out, "What shall I do to be saved?" We only ask of the reaping-machine, Does it gather the wheat into the granary? and we only ask of the preacher, Does he, by his ministry, gather men into the kingdom of God and into the love of our Lord Jesus Christ? If he does, he is a good reaping-machine; if he does not, he is a poor one.

We believe, also, that religion is a ministry not only for man, but it is ministered through men. It is human in the end and object it has in view, and it is human in the instruments which it employs. We count the Bible the most human of books, because we believe that in it God is speaking to men through men, because the only way God ever can or did speak to man is through men, because the only way in which God can be seen is by seeing the God that is in the human experience and the human soul. We believe that God made man in his own image; and that, therefore, in the experiences of man God is to be seen. We open the pages, the mystic pages, of human experience, when we want to know what God is. We read that God is love; and we look within the soul to see what love is. We read that God is justice; and we spell out justice in human letters. Men look at us and coin a great word, like a big bludgeon, and tell us that we believe in an-thro-po-morph-ism. It does not trouble us, and we answer: "Yes, if by anthropomorphism you mean this, that God is in the image of man because man is in the image of God, we believe it heartily, thoroughly, and down to the very depths of our being. We do not believe that he exists in a human form. We do not embody him in our conceptions of him. We do not believe in worshipping any graven image of God; but if we were going to worship a graven image we would take a man for a graven image—no, we would take a woman. We would prefer the worship of the Virgin Mary to any other form of idolatry the world has ever known, because a pure and perfect woman comes nearer to our thought of God than anything God ever made.

So it is by no accident that the men who believe in what is called the New Theology believe in what is called the Higher Criticism. We are not in the least afraid to take this book and go through it, and analyze it, and examine into its history, and find out who are the authors of its various books, and find out under what circumstances they were written. We are not at all afraid of the discovery that Moses did

not write all of the first five books. We are not at all dismayed that there is doubt whether Daniel wrote the Book of Daniel, or Solomon Solomon's Song, or David the Psalms of David. These things do not trouble us at all. We desire to know the truth, and we are perfectly ready to examine, and eager to find out what the truth is. You know that the light is invisible until it strikes a reflecting medium. The light as it exists in the waves of the ether no eye can see. The atmosphere translates it into luminous forms, into visible forms. So the truth of God is invisible until it comes into the atmosphere of human thought and human experience, and we study this atmosphere through which this light is translated to human eyes in order that we may better see the light, and may the better walk in it.

We believe, heartily believe, profoundly believe, in the doctrine of the incarnation. We believe that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself; but we believe that he was in a human Christ. It is a part of this movement that during the last twenty-five or thirty years as many lives of Christ have been written — written by men of the Dutch school, and of the English school, and of the French school, and of the German school; by men of the rationalistic school, and of the Catholic school, and of the Protestant school; by men evangelical and not evangelical. They have all been contributing to the study of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. And they have all held up his human character; they have portrayed his human life; they have gone abroad and visited the land in which he walked, lived under the skies under which he lived, rested on the hills where he preached; they have studied the times and the circumstances of his life; and they have put this life of Christ, the story of what he thought and said and did, in all its human environment and human setting; and we rejoice. They have done this because, in the setting forth of a man that spake as never man spake, and lived as man never lived, and that was more than man ever was or has been since, they set forth, whether they will or no, the divineness that was in him and shone through him. When we enter into our psychology of Christ we differ. Mr. Beecher says Jesus Christ was the spirit of God in a human body. I say that Jesus Christ was the spirit of God in a human soul and a human life. My friend says that Jesus Christ was God and man mysteriously joined together. But, however we psychologically differ one from another, we agree in this: God was in the human Christ, God was tabernacling in the flesh. It was a man that was lifted up to be the recipient of the divine glory and the manifestation of the divine personality to all coming ages.

We believe that this God that was in Christ, and this Christ in whom God was — we believe that he was reconciling the world to himself. We do not think that reconciliation or atonement is a mere letting men off from penalty; we do not think it is a mere putting aside of anger or wrath. We do not believe — and we are ready to profess our unfaith on all proper occasions — we do not believe that God looked on his great family of children with wrath and hatred, and that it required the blood of Christ to extinguish the flames that were burning in his soul. If that is atonement, we do not believe in atonement. But that is not atonement. We believe that God is reconciling the world to himself, taking the world to himself, holding

the world to his own heart, pouring himself, his own heart, into the world, filling it with his own presence, doing more than relieving it from penalty, doing more than even cleansing it from sin; he is transforming it, recreating it, making it divine. All the November day the clouds and the sun have been fighting each other, and at last, as the sun sinks toward the western horizon, the clouds yield and surrender. Now the sun shines through them all; it does not sweep them away, but it transfigures and transforms them; and all the west is full of magnificent and resplendent glory because the sun and clouds are reconciled. The clouds are filled with the glory of the sun. All winter long the sun and the winter have been battling with each other. There have been some spring days, but the spring has been driven back and repelled. All the winter long the ice has been holding the brooks in its chains. All the winter long the winter has been holding the seeds in their graves. And the sun has been shining and shining, and coming nearer and nearer, and getting warmer and warmer, until at last winter and sunshine are reconciled in the spring, and the earth takes the sun to its heart, and all the earth glows with the glory of the reconciliation. Four years two great armies stand facing each other in battle array—North and South, liberty and slavery, nationality and secession. At last, under that famous apple tree, the stars and bars come down and the stars and stripes run up. The work of reconciliation between North and South is finished. Finished? Just begun! The doors are open for a thousand influences to come from the liberty-loving North. Teachers pour in; books pour in; arts pour in; manufactures pour in; and through the years that are to come, the years that are now coming, the process of reconciliation is going on; for reconciliation between North and South means more than laying down the weapons of rebellion; it means more than surrender at Appomattox Court House; it means free press, free pulpit, free schools, free men, the song of freedom where before was the clanking of chains and the swish of the whip. Atonement means not merely the surrender of sinners to a forceful God, not merely the dissipation of the clouds, not merely the breaking up the frost, the surrender of an armed foe; it means the incoming of the heart and life and soul and mercy of God into the human heart and human life, filling it with himself and making all the race divine.

We believe in what men have called regeneration, or the new birth. We are asked, Do we believe that it is natural or supernatural? We cannot answer—because we think there is nothing so natural as the supernatural; because we think all things that are good and pure and true come from God; because we think it is the most unnatural thing that any man should be separated and estranged from God and the most natural thing that he should be in God and God in him. We do not believe in the distinction which Dr. Lyman Beecher used to draw between supernatural grace and what he called natural virtues. We believe that every virtue is a reflection of a Divine Spirit, a product of the Divine influence. It is as if a man should take a flower and ask, What colors on this flower come from the sun, and what come without sunshine? There is not a color there, red, green, purple, white, that the sun did not paint. And there is not an heroic act, there is not a noble aspiration, there is not a divine desire, there is not

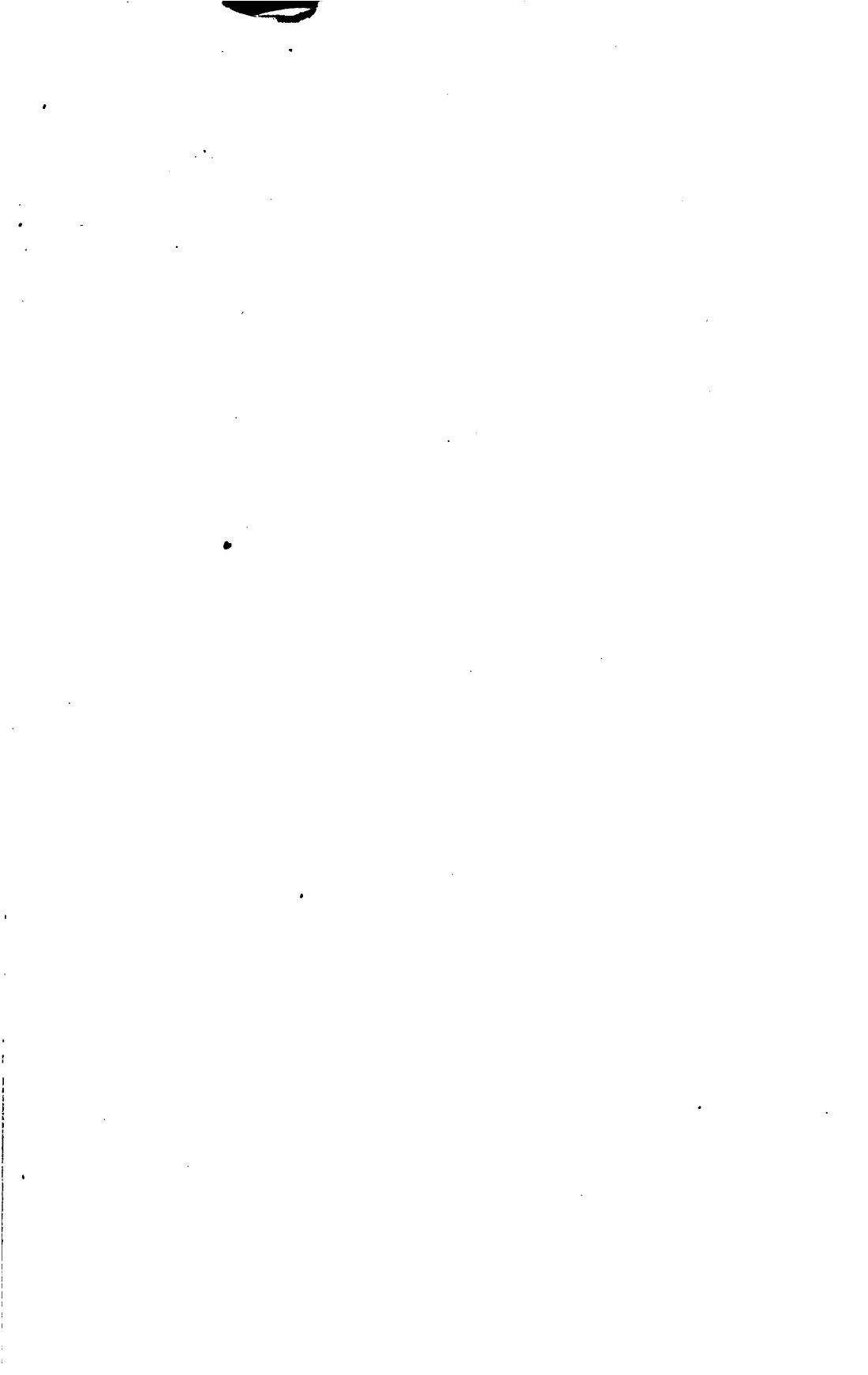
a dissatisfaction with self, there is not a longing wish for something nobler and better, there is not anywhere, nor ever was in any man, anything that was worthy of admiration and praise, that was not a reflection from the spirit and a product of the brooding love and life of God.

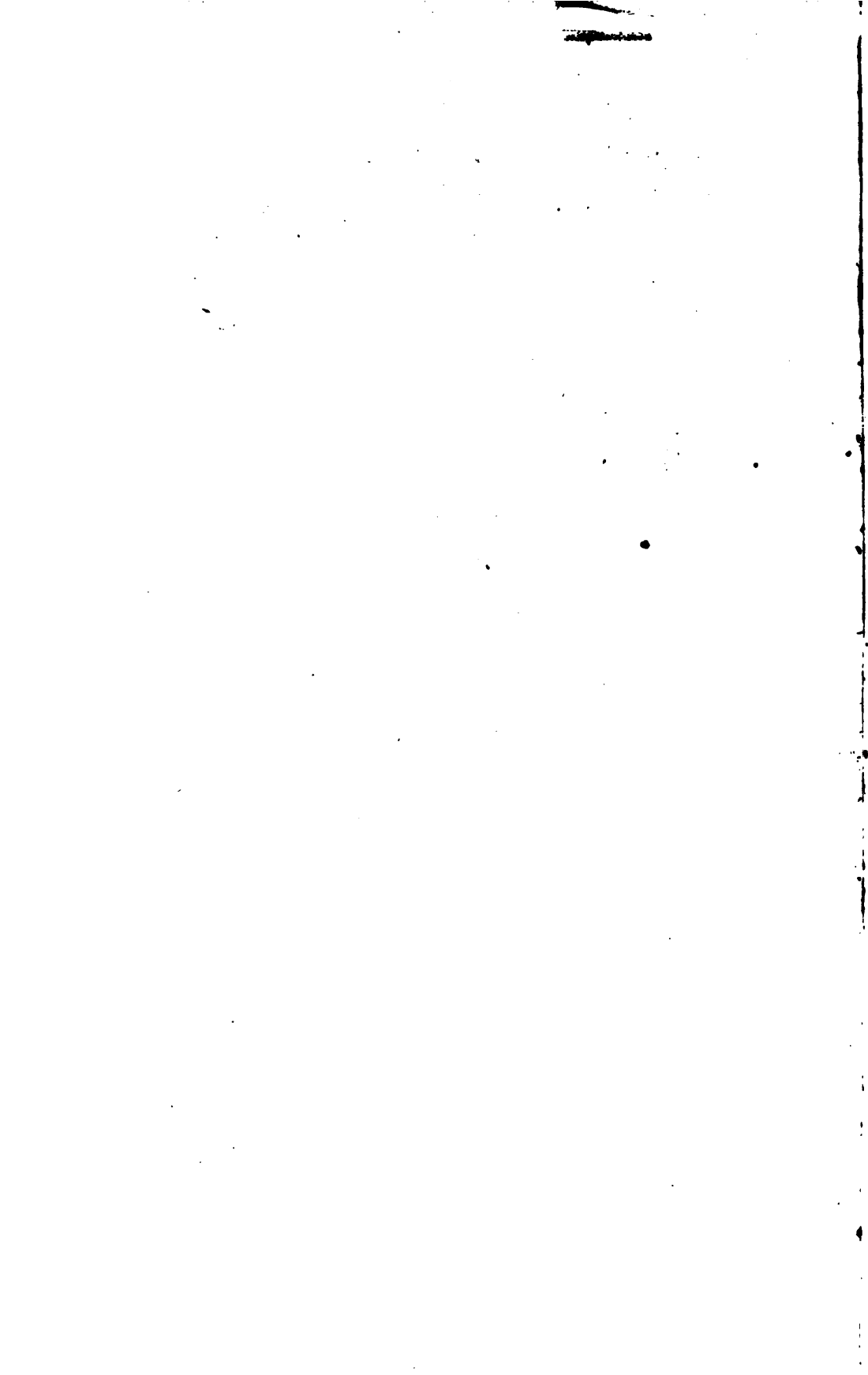
What we believe, we BELIEVE. Our faith is not growing less; it is growing deeper and stronger. We repudiate—it is sometimes difficult not to do it with a little indignation—the statement that we do not care what a man believes so he does what is right; or the other statement, that we think religion to consist chiefly in emotions and feelings and imaginations. We believe what we believe. We know what we know. It is true that we think less, perhaps, of creeds than our brethren do; but perhaps it is true that we think more of faith than they do. It is true that we think less of dogmas than our brethren do; but perhaps we think quite as much of beliefs as they do. What is the difference? I will try to tell you. Dogma is belief founded on authority. We believe a great many things on authority, particularly at the beginning of our education; but the older we grow, and the faster we grow, the more we get out of dogma and emerge into a better, a deeper, a profounder belief. The child goes to school and begins to study physics, and the teacher says to him at the outset, "The earth goes around the sun and revolves on its own axis." "How do you know?" The teacher replies, "You will have to take that on my authority; by and by you will learn how I know." And the pupil takes it on authority; and goes on, and studies arithmetic, and algebra, and geometry, and conic sections, and logarithms; and after he has been through school, and through the university, and gotten way up into the post-graduate course, and begun to use the observatory and the astronomic apparatus, at last he finds out for himself, by traveling the road which others have traveled before him, that the earth does go round the sun, and he dismisses the dogma because the dogma has become a personal faith. My child comes to me, and I say to him, "There is a God." "How do you know there is a God?" And I say to him, "My dear little child, I cannot tell you how I know; you must accept it on my statement for the present. By and by, when you have gone where I have gone; when you have known what tears are, and what divine comfort is; when you have known what darkness is, and what divine illumination is; when you have known what it is to be all alone in life, and yet not to be alone because the Father is with you; when you have gone through the experiences in which I have been schooled—you will not ask, 'How do you know there is a God?' you will know. You will dismiss the dogma, you will accept the faith." We hold to these great eternal verities of the spiritual world with a deeper faith and a stronger faith because it is a personal faith—a faith of life, a faith of experience. We cast away the dogma that we may grasp the faith and the truth.

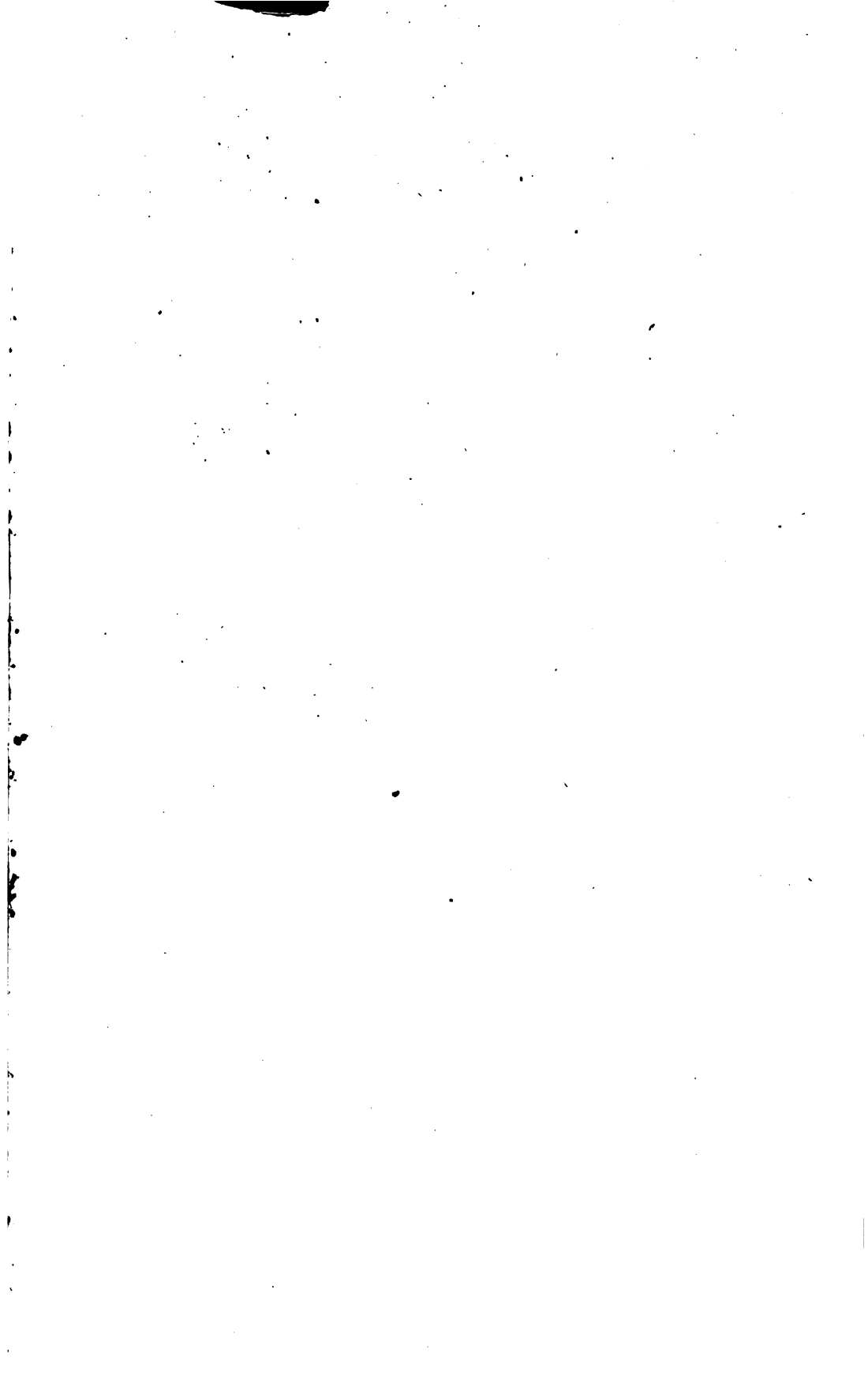
I accept the Apostles' Creed, though I give to the phrase "resurrection of the body" the modern interpretation. I accept the Nicene Creed, though I do not pretend to understand its definitions of the relation of the Son to the Father. I accept the new Congregational Creed—for substance of doctrine. I hold, as your former pastor

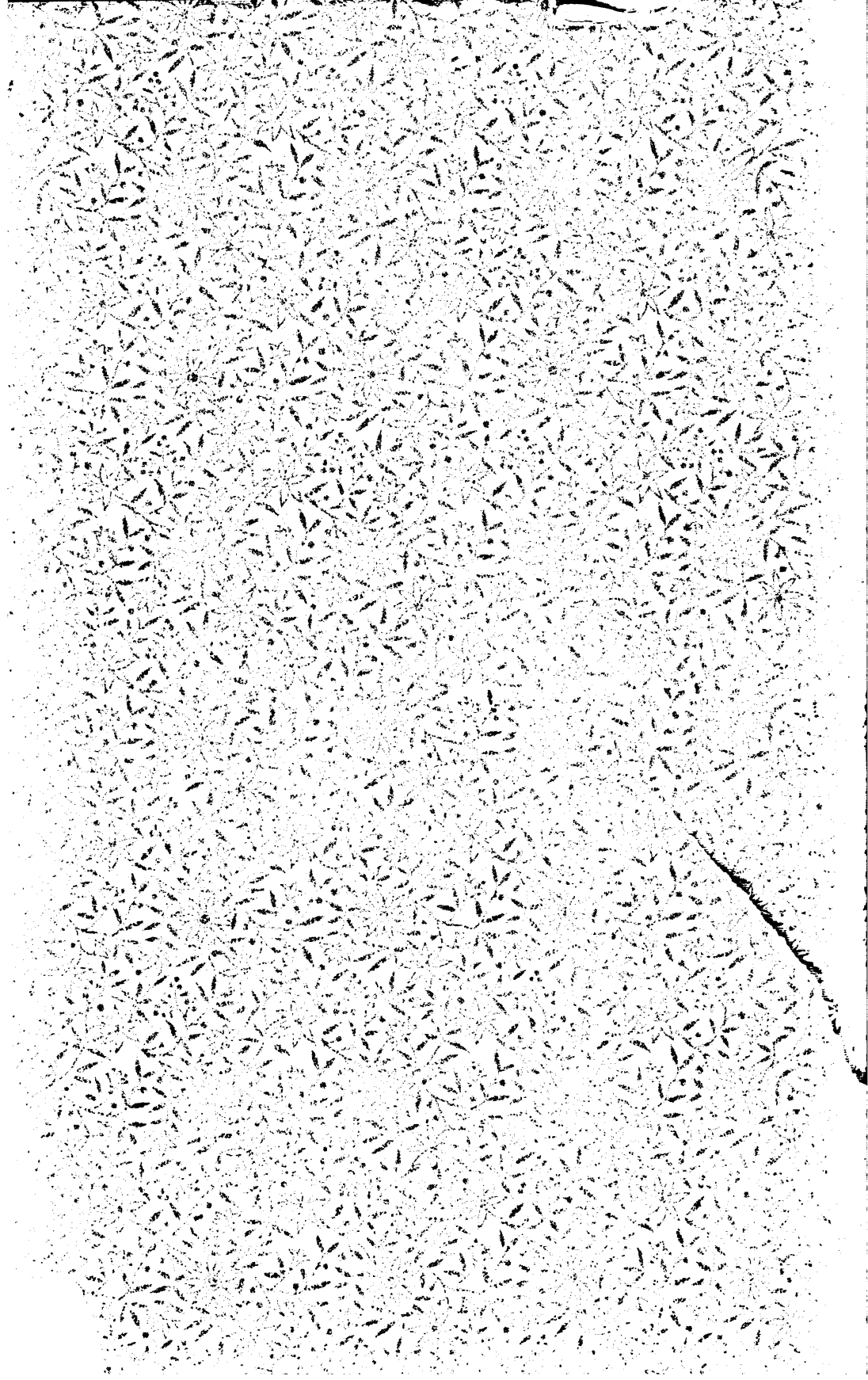
held, to the great spiritual truths which are the common inheritance of the Christian Church in all the past—faith in God, faith in Christ as God manifest in the flesh, faith in the new birth, the new life of man when brooded and begotten of God, faith in religion as the life of God in the human soul. These are all articles of my faith, and they are so because I believe in man, and in the power of man to receive God, and in the capacity of man to walk with God, and in my own soul's testimony, and in my own living experience of his presence and his truth.

But I do not speak merely for myself—I speak for you this morning. Sometimes it is a good plan for one quietly to sit down in his room and write in a journal—if he will only burn it up as soon as it is written—what he really thinks and what he really feels. It gives definiteness and positiveness to his convictions, and transforms that which was before a vague thought into a clear and positive conviction. So this morning I speak for Plymouth Church—have I spoken truly, brethren?—and I try to tell you what you believe, and what your pastor of olden time believed, and what I believe—what we all believe. We thank God for the fellowship that was given us here last Thursday, and for the hands outstretched to us, and for the Godspeed given to us, and, not least of all, for the warm, kind, sympathetic, cordial words that were said of him who has gone from us. The spirit of truth is marching on, and the spirit of love; and it is growing wider and broader and deeper: faith in the love of God, a love that includes all his children; faith in the Christ of God, whose Gospel is for all humanity; faith in love for God in the human soul of love, of which every child may be the recipient; faith in humanity because man is the child of God; and hatred, undying hatred, enmity, unalterable and inextinguishable enmity, to every influence, to every power, to every kind of darkness that is keeping man from God by keeping him in sensualism, animalism, and ignorance. May God help us as we enter anew on our common work to be followers of those that have gone before, as they also were followers of Christ Jesus our Lord.











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